# TOMMY TIPTOP
## AND HIS
# BOY SCOUTS

RAYMOND

Harold Philip Marshall.
"Christmas" 1927.

The parade was through the principal streets.

# TOMMY TIPTOP AND HIS BOY SCOUTS

OR

## THE DOINGS OF THE SILVER FOX PATROL

BY

RAYMOND STONE

AUTHOR OF "TOMMY TIPTOP AND HIS BASEBALL NINE," "TOMMY TIPTOP AND HIS WINTER SPORTS," "TOMMY TIPTOP AND HIS BOAT CLUB," ETC.

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# BOOKS FOR BOYS

**BY RAYMOND STONE**

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*Tommy Tiptop and His Boy Scouts*

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# Tommy Tiptop and His Boy Scouts

## CHAPTER I

### TOMMY IS LOST

TOMMY TIPTOP stood leaning against the back fence in his yard. He had just finished weeding a bed of flowers, which task his mother had set him at early that morning, and his back ached.

"But I've got out every weed!" exclaimed Tommy, proudly. "I don't believe there's one left. The only trouble is there'll be just as many next week. I don't see why someone can't invent a flower bed that won't grow weeds. What good are they, anyhow?"

He began to think over this new idea, and he was wondering whether he, himself, might not discover some plan by which flowers could be made to grow without weeds springing up between them.

"Anyhow, I'm done for to-day," murmured Tommy.

He looked at the flower bed again, to make sure that he had not skipped some weed. For Tommy was a very careful chap, who, once he started a thing, liked to finish it up completely.

It was Saturday, a beautiful day in early Summer, and

Tommy began to wonder how he could have some fun, with no school in prospect, and many hours in which to enjoy himself. His garden task was ended and the rest of the time was his own.

"Guess I'll go over and get Sammie, or Georgie, and some of the boys, and have a row on the river," he murmured. "That is if we can find someone to look after us." Tommy and his chums were not allowed to go out on the river alone, though Tommy had organized a boat club, and the boys had a fine craft of their own. But always an older person went with them.

"I don't know who I could get, though," went on Tommy, as he rubbed the dirt from his hands, and put away the piece of old bagging he had used to kneel on while he did the weeding. "Mr. Watson isn't around, and I can't get him. I have it, though! Johnny Green! He knows a lot about boats, even if he is old, and we'll be safe with him. I'll ask mother if it's all right to take him in the boat with us. Johnnie is real careful."

Johnny Green was an odd but gentle character about town, and a great favorite with Tommy and his chums.

Filled with this new idea, Tommy started for the house to ask his mother if he and his chums might not go out on the river. But he had taken only a few steps when, from a vacant lot near the back fence, he heard a voice calling and asking this question:

"Which is the shortest way to Parkville? I guess I'm off the trail."

Tommy turned to see, looking at him over the fence, a lad older than himself, and wearing the outfit of a boy scout. The stranger was attired in the drab uniform, with leggings and campaign hat complete, and on his back was a knapsack, while, held in his hand, was a long bow. Over one shoulder

could be seen a quiver, with scarlet-tipped feathers sticking out of it.

"Parkville?" repeated Tommy, questioningly.

"Yes, I'm on my way there, but I seem to have gotten off the trail. I never traveled it before, and it isn't blazed very well," and the strange boy smiled at Tommy.

"You can get to it this way," replied our hero, after some thought, "but you'd have done better to have gone through Rosedale. That's a shorter way."

"Well, it's too late for that now," replied the other, with another smile, "so I'll have to do the best I can. If you'll tell me the way to get to Parkville from here I'll be ever so much obliged to you."

"Of course I'll tell you!" exclaimed Tommy. "Do you belong to the boy scouts?" he went on, curiously.

"Yes."

"I s'pose I might have known it," added Tommy, with a grin. Then he happened to think of something, and he brought his right hand to his head in a formal military salute.

The other returned it promptly, and then asked, with a merry look in his blue eyes:

"Are you a scout, too?"

"No," answered Tommy. "But I'm thinking of being one."

"Well, I guess you'll be very glad when you do join a patrol," went on the other. "I'm only a second-class scout myself, but I'll soon take my examinations for first class."

"Could I be a scout?" asked Tommy, thinking it well to get all the advance information he could. Already his brain was busy, and he was going to work on a plan to change his boat club into a boy scout organization.

"You'd have to be a tenderfoot first," said the other.

"But it doesn't take long to become a scout. Now I guess I'd better be hiking along. But you haven't given me the directions."

"That's so!" laughed Tommy. "I was forgetting about that. Well, you go right across these fields, for about a mile, and then you come to a patch of woods. Go through them, starting in near the white bridge. When you come out on the other side you'll strike a road that goes to Parkville."

"And which way do I turn when I get on the road—after I leave the woods?" asked the boy scout.

"To the left," answered Tommy, making a mental note of how careful the other was. Then he saw the strange lad take out pencil and paper and write down the directions that had been given him.

"I don't want to make a mistake," he said. "I'm late enough as it is now, with getting on the wrong road, and I can't afford to get lost again. I'm much obliged to you——"

He paused a moment, and Tommy said:

"My name is Tiptop—Tommy Tiptop."

"Glad to know you," said the other, who might have been about fifteen years old. "My name is Donald Berry."

"What club do you belong to of the scouts?" asked Tommy, who was becoming more and more interested as he noted the trim uniform the other wore.

"We don't call them clubs—we call them 'patrols.' I belong to Black Eagle Patrol, in our Sunday School troop. We have three patrols in the troop, but we expect to add another soon."

"Where do you live?" asked Tommy.

"In Haldenburg."

"You do! Why, that's not far from Millton, and I used to live there."

"That's rather odd, that we should meet this way," commented Donald Berry.

"Have you heard of any of the fellows in Millton getting up a boy scout patrol?" asked Tommy, eagerly.

"Well, I did hear a rumor to that effect, but nothing definite. I don't get over there very often."

"I'll have to get busy," mused Tommy to himself. "I want to get ahead of Dan Danforth, and the boat club fellows in Millton, in organizing my patrol."

You can see by this how rapidly Tommy Tiptop did things. Ten minutes before he had had little more idea of being a boy scout than he had of taking his sister's dolls out in the carriage. Now he had formed half a dozen plans for himself and his chums.

"Well, much obliged to you. I guess I can get to Parkville now," said Donald, as he started off. "I hope I see you again sometime. If you want to know anything about the scouts and will write to me, I'll give you all the information I can. We scouts always help each other you know."

"Thank you very much," said Tommy.

"And if I can't tell you what you want to know I'll have our scout master write," went on Donald.

"What's going on in Parkville with the scouts, anyhow?" asked Tommy, making up his mind to get all the further information he could.

"Oh, we're going to have a hike, and meet with two or three troops from there. Then we've got a series of contests on—relay races, scout work, fire-making with sticks, boiling water, and so on."

"Are you going to shoot arrows?" asked Tommy. This appealed to him very much.

"Yes, I'm trying for an archer's badge," replied Donald. "I'm not very good at it, but I'm practicing every day. There

is going to be some target practice this afternoon. I hope I'm not late for it. I guess if it came to getting credit marks for picking up a blind trail I wouldn't be well up in front this time—getting lost on my way."

"Oh, well, you took a wrong turn—that's all," said Tommy sympathetically. "I guess you'll be all right now."

"I hope so," said the other as he saluted. Tommy returned it and then Donald "hiked" off across the fields toward the patch of woodland, through which was a short cut to Parkville.

Tommy Tiptop hurried into the house. Gone now was all thought of going out on the river in the boat. Tommy had a new idea, and, as usual, he got quite excited over it.

"Mother!" he cried, fairly leaping into the kitchen where Mrs. Tiptop was busy with her Saturday baking, "mother, may I go to Parkville?"

"What for?" asked Mrs. Tiptop.

"To see the boy scouts drill. It's going to be fine. I'll get some of our fellows, and we'll go there. I'm going to start a patrol of my own. Please, mother, say I may go?"

"Oh, I don't know, Tommy dear. You want to do so many things!" and Mrs. Tiptop sat down in a chair and wiped the flour off her hands. "Besides it's a good distance to Parkville."

"Oh, it isn't far at all!" exclaimed Tommy. "We can easily walk it in an hour. We'll take the short cut through the woods. There was a fellow just asking me about the road. He's a boy scout and he's got a bow and arrows. There's going to be bow and arrow target practice, and boiling water, and making a fire with sticks——!"

"A fire with sticks?" exclaimed Mrs. Tiptop, interrupting her excited small son, "why, a fire is always made with sticks."

"Oh, I mean make a fire by rubbing sticks together."

"Ho!" laughed Tommy's sister Nellie. "Who could make a fire that way? You have to have a match; don't you, mother?"

"No, you can make a fire by rubbing sticks together, but I don't know how, exactly," said Tommy. "The Indians used to do it. But say I can go, mother! Do, please!"

"Well, I don't know," she began, slowly. "It's near dinner time, and——!"

"The flower bed is all weeded!" broke in Tommy. "It looks fine! If I go to Parkville I can buy some lunch there. I've got ten cents."

Mrs. Tiptop smiled. Tommy knew then that he could go.

"Well," said his mother, "you must be very careful. Take some of your chums with you, and here's some more change for your lunch. Now don't eat a lot of candy, cake or other indigestible stuff. Get some warm soup, if you can, or a bowl of bread and milk."

"I will, mother. Thank you very much for letting me go. I'll go get some of the boys!"

Tommy darted out of the door, thrusting the money into his pocket as he ran.

"And be careful about those bows and arrows!" called his mother after him. "Don't get in the way of them!"

"I won't!" he echoed back.

A little later Tommy was calling out in front of the home of one of his close chums.

"Hey, Sammie! Sammie Sandlass! Come on out. We're going to Parkville and see the boy scouts drill. Hurry up!"

A small boy, with a head of red hair, thrust the head out of the window.

"What's the matter?" he inquired.

"Come on! Don't stop to ask questions. I'm going to

organize a boy scout patrol. We're going over to Parkville now to see 'em drill, and find out how they do it. Get your cap and come on. We'll get Joie Grubb, and Georgie Pennington, and some of the others. Hurry!"

"Say, you're doing things again, Tommy Tiptop!" said Sammie. "But I'll be with you. What is it you're getting up now—a hockey team?"

"No, boy scouts! Hurry up."

Tommy and Sammie, eagerly discussing the new plan, went on to the home of some of their other chums, and soon four boys were fairly running across the field toward the woods, through which was a short cut to Parkville.

Eagerly Tommy explained his idea to them, and Georgie, Sammie and Joie were much interested. They asked all sorts of questions of Tommy, but he could not answer them.

"I don't know much about the scouts yet," he said. "But we can soon learn. This hike, and the contests, will be just what we want to see."

They had reached the woods now, and started through them. This patch of forest was rather wild, and was not often visited, as it was off the main road. A highway ran along one edge, and this road was the one the boys wanted to reach, as it led to Parkville.

"How long since you've been going to be a boy scout?" panted Joie Grubb, as he hurried along after the others. Joie was quite fat, and when he hurried his breath came in gasps.

"Oh, I happened to think of the plan when I saw that boy scout," admitted Tommy. "It came to me in a flash."

"That's usually the way things do come to you, Tommy Tiptop," commented Sammie, as he took off his cap and ran his fingers through his red hair. "My, but it's hot though!"

"Yes, let's go a little slow," suggested Joie. "It seems to me that this patch of woods is bigger than it ever was before."

"That's right!" added Georgie Pennington. "Are you sure this is the right way, Tommy?"

Up to this point Tommy had been quite sure of himself. But now that someone raised a point about the direction he became somewhat confused.

"Why, I guess this is the right way," he said, slowly.

"Aren't you sure?" demanded Sammie.

"Well, no, not exactly."

"We ought to come to the road pretty soon," said Georgie.

"Yes, let's keep on a little longer," suggested Tommy.

They walked on for ten minutes more. Then Tommy came to a sudden stop, looked about him in confusion, and said:

"I guess we'd better go back."

"Back home?" asked Sammie, in surprise.

"No, back to where we branched off by the big rock. You know there were two paths there."

"Why should we go back?" Joie wanted to know. "I'm too tired to go back. Let's rest and keep on. I want to see the scout drills."

"So do I," replied Tommy, "but I'm afraid we're on the wrong path in these woods."

For a moment none of his companions spoke. Then Sammie, twisting his short, stubby fingers in his red hair, asked:

"What do you mean, Tommy Tiptop?"

"I mean that I'm lost!" admitted Tommy, frankly. "I don't know which way to go."

"Lost!" exclaimed Georgie. "That's funny."

"Funny! I don't think it's very funny!" gasped Joie, as he sank down on a log. "It's no fun to be lost!"

## CHAPTER II

### TOMMY AND THE BLAZED TRAIL

TOMMY TIPTOP was somewhat at a loss what to do. He looked at his chums and they looked at him. Tommy felt sure they believed it to be all his fault that they were lost in the woods, though none of them said so.

True he had made the proposal to go to Parkville, but he had not led the march through the woods, any more than had Sammie or Joie or Georgie. They had all gone along together, first one being in the lead, and then another.

There was only one main path leading into the woods from the side nearest the town of Riverdale, where Tommy and his chums lived, but soon after getting into the forest a number of paths branched off.

"And we must have taken one of those without knowing it," decided Tommy, when they had talked the matter over.

"Well, the next question is:—What are we going to do about it, fellows?" proposed Joie Grubb. "We can't stay here all day. Besides, I'm getting hungry. I either want to get to Parkville and see the boy scouts, or else I want to go back home to my dinner."

"Oh, don't be such a fusser!" exclaimed Tommy, a bit sharply. "I guess we all want to get out of these woods as much as you, Joie Grubb."

"That's right—give Tommy a chance," urged Sammie. "He'll find a way out if anyone can."

"I'll try, anyhow," said Tommy, with spirit. "I've been in

these woods before. Let me look about a minute and think."

And, while Tommy is doing this I will take just a few minutes of your time to tell you something more about Tommy and his chums.

Tommy, as I have said, lived with his father and mother in the town of Riverdale. It was on the Dale river, and in this stream, some little distance from the village, was Hemlock Island, located in the middle of a wide part of the stream. The island was quite large and on it was a cabin owned by a Mr. Wentworth, the Riverdale hardware merchant. Often Tommy and his chums had spent some time in the cabin, which made a sort of hunters' camp. An old hunter, called Uncle Isaac, was in charge.

Tommy and his parents, with his sister Nellie, had formerly lived in the town of Millton, but had moved away from there before this story begins. As for Tommy's chums and friends he had so many of them that I will not name them all now. You will meet the others as we go along.

In my first book, called "Tommy Tiptop and his Baseball Nine," I told you how Tommy and his chums had fun on the diamond.

And in the second volume, entitled "Tommy Tiptop and His Football Eleven," I had the pleasure of telling you about a great victory, and how it was won. Then winter came, and in the book called "Tommy Tiptop and His Winter Sports," I related how the boys were snowbound in the cabin on Hemlock Island.

The book just before this one was called "Tommy Tiptop and His Boat Club," and in that you may learn how Tommy, most unexpectedly, became the owner of a fine boat, and how he and his chums learned to row. They took part in a race, too.

Now Summer was at hand and our small hero—who was

about ten years old—began to look about for other chances to have good times. And you have seen how he got the idea for a boy scout patrol, and how anxious he was to get this started. But just at present Tommy and his chums are lost in the woods, so we must go back to learn how they are getting on.

"Well, have you thought of anything yet?" asked Sammie, when Tommy had walked about a bit, looking earnestly from side to side.

"I guess he can't make anything else out of it except that we are lost!" exclaimed Joie, dolefully.

"Oh, let up on that—can't you?" asked Sammie, rather sharply. "We all know we're lost, and it wasn't any more Tommy's fault than it was ours. We're all in the same boat."

"I wish we *were* in our boat!" sighed Joie. "Rowing is a lot easier than walking," and he said this in such a doleful tone that they all laughed—even Tommy who was quite puzlezd as to what to do.

"Why not take a certain point, and walk in four directions from that for a certain distance?" suggested Georgie Pennington. "We could soon tell which was the right way."

"Let's do something!" exclaimed Joie. "I'm hungry!"

"We might try that," proposed Tommy. "But I have another plan. If we all stick together, and try four different ways of finding a path, it will take us quite a while."

"What else can we do?" asked Sammie.

"Each one go off by himself and try to find a way out of the woods," answered Tommy. "That will make it four times as quick. What do you say?"

"I guess that would be a good idea," agreed Joie. "I'll start as soon as I'm rested."

"Rested!" laughed Georgie. "You've been sitting on that log for ten minutes. How long does it take you to rest, anyhow?"

"Longer than anyone else," answered Tommy. "You see Joie is bigger than any of us, and there's more of him that needs resting."

"Huh! I'm not so fat as I was before we started rowing," came from the stout boy.

"Well, here goes to find the way out of the woods!" exclaimed Georgie, as he got up from the stump where he was sitting. "Which way shall I start, Tommy?"

The lad who had originated the idea about the boy scouts paused for a moment, and then answered.

"We'll go in four different directions from this stump. Each fellow will walk one hundred steps, and then stop. That will not be so far but what we can hear each other call. If anyone finds a path that looks as if it led to the main road, yell for all you're worth, and the rest of us will come."

"And if we don't find it?" asked Joie.

"Well, keep on a little farther, after you've gone one hundred steps. Then come back to this stump, and we'll talk it over some more."

"Huh! I don't think we'll see much of that boy scout drill!" exclaimed Joie.

"Well, we'll do the best we can," answered Tommy, trying not to lose his temper.

The boys lined up around the stump, and started off, one to the East, another to the West, a third to the North, and the fourth to the South, as nearly as they could tell.

Farther and farther apart they separated, each one looking eagerly on every side for a sight of some path. Joie, Georgie and Sammie went quite slowly, afraid of missing some part of the trail. Tommy was naturally quick, and he hurried on.

He had not covered more than half of the one hundred steps, or paces, he had set as a limit, before the others heard him call:

"Hi, fellows! Over here! I've found it."

"That's good!" exclaimed Sammie. "Come on, boys!"

"At last!" shouted Joie. "I guess I'll get something to eat after all!"

The three of them ran through the woods toward where they heard Tommy's voice They crashed through the underbrush, leaped over logs and stones, sometimes falling down, but always keeping on. They were really tired out, and anxious to get through the woods.

"Where's the path? I don't see any," remarked Sammie, when he had come to where Tommy stood.

"It isn't exactly a path," explained Tommy. "It's a blazed trail."

"What's a blazed trail?" asked Joie. "Is it one that's been burned?"

"No," explained Tommy. "To blaze a trail means to take an axe or hatchet and chip off a little bark on the trees. Chip off some, say on every fifth or sixth tree, along the way you want to go.

"Then, by walking from one tree to another, you can find your way through the woods whether there's a regular path or not."

"That's a good idea!" exclaimed Joie. "How'd you do it?"

"I didn't do it," said Tommy. "I found this blazed trail already here. Someone else must have made it. Maybe a hunter, or perhaps a boy scout. You learn to do that when you're a scout."

"But where does this trail lead to?" Georgie wanted to know.

"I can't tell," answered Tommy. "But it must lead somewhere. I'm sure it will bring us out of the woods. We'll try it, anyhow."

"Hi, fellows! over here! I've found it."

"Maybe that scout you directed to Parkville blazed it," suggested Georgie.

"Maybe," admitted Tommy. "Anyhow, let's hike!"

"Hike! What's that?" asked Joie. "Does it mean *eat?*"

"No, it means march, or walk. After that we'll eat," said Tommy, with a laugh, glad that he had found the blazed trail.

## CHAPTER III

### TOMMY IS DISAPPOINTED

FOR a time after Tommy and his chums had started along the blazed trail, they were not quite sure, after all, that they were on the right path. True the blazes, or white marks on the trees, where the bark had been chipped off, showed plainly, and were quite close together.

"And I'm sure someone must have made them who knew what he was doing," declared Tommy. "I believe we're on the path that will take us to the road that leads to Parkville."

"Well, I'll be sure when I see the place," spoke Joie Grubb, "and more sure when I can see a hotel or restaurant where we can get something to eat."

"Say, it's a wonder you wouldn't forget about eating, once in a while!" exclaimed Sammie.

"Do you ever forget?" asked Joie.

"No, I don't exactly forget. I'm generally around when it's meal time. But I'm not always talking about it."

"Well, maybe you're not always hungry," said Joie, with a sigh, at which the others laughed.

As they went on the path became more plain, until, in a little while, they saw, through the trees, a country road.

"Hurray!" cried Joie. "Now we're all right!"

"That's the place!" explained Georgie, running on ahead.

"I told you we'd be all right, if we left it to Tommy!" went on Sammie.

Tommy said nothing. But he was glad that he had not been mistaken.

"Come on, fellows," went on Sammie, as he fanned himself with a leaf, "let's move along now, and get there in time to see the doings."

"And before all the things to eat are gone," added Joie. "Oh, but I'm hungry!"

The others laughed again.

"Let's make out we're in a race," suggested Georgie. "That will send us along lively."

"I'm with you!" cried Sammie, entering into the spirit of the fun. "Don't catch any crabs now!"

Just as he spoke Joie, hurrying forward, tripped over a tangled vine at his feet. Down went the fat boy in a heap. And, as Tommy was just in front of him, Joie knocked Tommy down also. The two fell on the path, in a tangle of arms and legs.

"What's this—a football rush?" asked Georgie.

"It does look like it," said Sammie. "First down! Ten yards to gain!"

"I didn't mean to do that, Tommy," spoke Joie, as he rolled off his chum, and got up.

"I know you didn't," was the answer, as Tommy rubbed his elbow and head. "But the next time someone has to fall on me let it be Sammie or Georgie. They're lighter than you, Joie."

The boys all laughed, and then set off through the woods to cover the short remaining distance that led to the road. They soon reached the highway, and then Tommy knew where he was.

"It isn't far to Parkville now," he said. "We'll be in plenty of time to see the scouts drill."

"Aren't we going to eat first?" Joie Grubb wanted to know.

"Look here!" exclaimed Sammie. "Just because your name is Grubb is no reason why you should always be eating, Joie."

"I'm not!" protested the other boy. "But I want to eat when it's meal time, and I guess you do, too, Sammie Sandlass, even if you have got red hair."

"Say you let my hair alone! I can't help it because it's red!" and Sammie scowled at Joie.

"Oh, take it easy, fellows," suggested Tommy. "If we're going to belong to the boy scouts we can't be quarreling."

"Are we really going to belong?" asked Georgie.

"Sure, I'm going to get up a patrol," declared Tommy, as if it was the easiest thing in the world.

"But we'll have to have some older fellow as scout master," declared Joie, as they tramped along the dusty road.

"Well, that's easy," suggested Tommy. "Maybe Frank's uncle, Mr. Watson, who trained us in the boat race, will come back to town. I heard Frank say he might. You know he spoke of getting up a boys' camp, and it would be just as easy to have a scout patrol."

"Well, I like the idea—at least I will when I've had something to eat," spoke Joie, with a sigh.

The boys laughed at the fat lad, and then hurried on. They were passed by several wagons and carriages, containing persons who were evidently on their way to town to see the "doings." And from the talk that floated down to our friends it was evident that the scout "meet" was going to be quite an affair.

"Say, but I'm glad I heard about this!" exclaimed Tommy, as he hurried on at a faster pace. "We can get a lot of good ideas for our patrol."

"What are you going to call it?" asked Joie.

"I haven't thought of a name yet. It will be something

about animals or birds though. Look, there's Parkville now!"

Tommy pointed ahead. They turned a bend in the road, and saw, lying at the foot of a little slope, the village where the boy scouts were to assemble. A little later, passing a cross road, they heard the sound of fifes and drums, and, looking they saw approaching a patrol of lads, under the leadership of their master.

The boys marched proudly along, carrying long staffs over their shoulders instead of guns. They wore the regulation uniforms, and their flag was carried, along with the Stars and Stripes. The sight was a fine one, and the thrilling notes of the fifes, and the rattle of the drums, made Tommy and his chums step out bravely.

"Say, but that's great!" exclaimed Tommy, with sparkling eyes. "I wonder if we'll ever be like that?"

"I don't see why not," spoke Sammie. "I can drum some, and I can learn more. And one of us ought to be able to learn how to toot on a fife. Sure we can do it!"

"I hope so," murmured Tommy. He and his chums marched along in the rear of the scouts, which patrol was evidently on its way to take part in the contests.

A little later our friends, following the lead of the scouts, came into the outskirts of the town of Parkville. There the crowds increased. The scouts marched in the middle of the street, but Tommy and his chums took to the sidewalk. The pavements were lined with curious spectators who looked interestedly at the sight of the boy marchers.

As the centre of town was neared the crowds became more dense, and from various side streets came marching other patrols of boys in their uniforms.

"Oh, this is great!" cried Tommy, who grew more and more excited every minute. "It is simply great! I'm sure we'll have to have a boy scout patrol!"

"Say!" murmured Joie Grubb in Tommy's ear, "there's a restaurant over there. Let's eat!"

Tommy turned quickly on his fat chum.

"Eat!" he exclaimed. "Is that all you think of? Here you've got a chance to see something you don't often see! You have a chance to learn some fine points about the scouts, and you look at a restaurant instead. The idea!"

"That's right!" chimed in Sammie. "So he does!"

"I don't care—I'm hungry!" protested Joie.

"Maybe it would be as well to eat first," suggested Georgie. "I don't mind saying I'm hungry myself. The parade and hike won't come off until after dinner, anyhow."

"All right. I'm willing," agreed Tommy. "I don't want to stop anybody from eating, but Joie's doing it all the while."

"I am not!" cried the fat boy.

"Oh, come on! The easiest way to stop talking is to eat," suggested Sammie.

On making some inquiries, Tommy and his chums learned that the parade of the scouts would be through the main streets of the town, and that later there would be games and contests in the public square, in the centre of Parkville.

The boys did not spend much time over their meal, which was a simple one. That is except in the case of Joie. He ordered more, and ate more, than the others. But then, as he explained, he was bigger, and needed more.

Once again out in the street, the visitors found more excitement going on. Other patrols had arrived and some of the town officials were now riding back and forth in carriages or on horseback. They were to be a sort of guard of honor to the scouts.

Tommy learned that the meet was the first annual one of all the troops in that vicinity. Tommy's own town, Riverdale was represented, but only by one patrol, and that one had been

recently formed. Tommy had known nothing about it until he saw some of the larger boys, whom he knew slightly, marching in to Parkville.

"Here they come!" was the general cry a little later. "Here comes the parade!"

Down the street was heard the sound of music. A small band had been hired to lead the procession, which had formed on the outskirts of the town, to march through it.

There was a rush on the part of all to get good places, and Tommy and his friends were lucky to find points whence they could view the demonstration.

"I can't see very well," complained Joie Grubb. He was in the midst of a small crowd. Joie was not very tall, and could not look over the heads of others.

"Here you are, sonny!" called a man, evidently a farmer, "you can stand on my soap box."

A number of the visitors to town had either brought boxes with them, or bought them from enterprising boys, who sold them for five or ten cents each.

"Thank you!" said Joie, as he climbed up on the box in front of the man. "I can see fine now, and——"

But that was as far as Joie got. An instant later the top of the box crushed in, and Joie found himself wedged fast by the feet in the splintered wood. The farmer was in the same trouble.

The crowd laughed. Joie looked ashamed, but the farmer only joined in the fun.

"I guess we put too much of a strain on the box," he said. "I didn't think you were quite so heavy, son."

"Neither did I," murmured Joie. "I'm sorry."

"Well, it can't be helped. Here, boy," the man called, "I'll have to have another box. Give me a strong one this time."

"All right," was the answer, and another box, larger and heavier, was set down. When Joie and the man got on this it held them.

By this time the parade was almost at the place where Tommy and his friends stood. The band blared out, and now and then could be heard the blowing of a bugle, giving some command or order.

"Oh, but I'm glad I came!" murmured Tommy.

On came the marching boy scouts, and now they were opposite our hero. The mayor of the town was in an open carriage, with some other officials. In front was a mounted policeman, and then, after the mayor's carriage, came another, containing one of the national officers of the boy scout organization. He was to deliver an address later in the day, telling the boys something of the work of the scout movement.

The first division of the scouts consisted of lads considerably older than most of our boys.

These marchers carried real rifles, which they had borrowed for the occasion. The next patrol was led by a corps of buglers, and the scouts had wooden guns. Next came some with staffs, and following them was a patrol equipped with bows and arrows.

"There's the fellow I was talking to over our fence!" exclaimed Tommy, as he saw Donald Berry with the others. But Donald was marching along with his eyes looking straight ahead, and so he did not see Tommy.

"I'll try to find him later," decided our hero. "Oh, but won't we have fun, fellows, when we get our patrol organized!"

There came a halt to the line of march, and in the silence that followed the stopping of the music Tommy's remark was heard by several persons standing near.

"Do you belong to a boy scout patrol?" asked the man who was sharing his soap box with Joie.

"No, sir. But I'm going to organize one," said Tommy.

"Is that so? You don't look old enough to join—any of you," and the man looked at Tommy's chums.

"We're all nearly eleven!" was the reply.

"Eleven!" exclaimed the man. "You're too young! No one can become a boy scout unless he is twelve years old or over. You're not old enough!"

"Twelve years!" exclaimed Tommy. "Is that right?"

"That's right," answered a gentleman standing near. "My boy belongs, and he had to wait for his twelfth birthday to join."

"Then we're too young!" murmured Tommy. He was disappointed—bitterly disappointed, for he had counted much on organizing a patrol.

## CHAPTER IV

### TOMMY IS TURNED DOWN

TOMMY TIPTOP and his chums glanced at one another. There was a blank look of dismay on each face.

"Never mind, boys," said the gentleman who had spoken of his own son. "Being young is no crime. You'll soon be old enough to join."

"But we want to belong *now,*" spoke Tommy. "I don't see what difference a few years make."

"Well, there has to be rules," said the farmer with a smile. "Rules for everything, boys. Otherwise the world wouldn't wag along as it does. Here they go again!"

A bugle blared out some order, and at once the line of boy scouts was again in motion. There had been some delay at the head of the procession. On marched the boys, making a fine sight as they passed the place where Tommy and his chums stood.

Tommy did not say much. He wanted to be alone and think it out. He had been so confident that he could organize a patrol, that he had never stopped to consider the matter of age. And, as he looked at the marching boys, some of whom, at least, did not appear to be any older than himself and his chums, the bitterness in his heart increased.

"I don't care!" he murmured to himself. "It doesn't seem fair! We ought to be let join!"

But, in his own heart, Tommy knew that it was fair for the

organization of boy scouts to make whatever laws and rules they saw fit, for the best interests of all.

"Well," said Tommy, at length, to Joie Grubb, "if we can't have a patrol, I suppose we can't—and that's all there is to it."

"Looks that way," admitted Joie. "Anyhow, we can have some fun with the boats. They can't stop us from having a boat club."

"That's right," declared Tommy, brightening up somewhat.

Still he felt the disappointment keenly, and he hardly cared to look longer at the marching boys. But he put this feeling aside, and made up his mind that he would learn all he could by watching those more lucky than himself, whose ages allowed them to be members.

"For I'm going to be a scout, and have a patrol some day—as soon as we are old enough!" exclaimed Tommy, firmly.

"And I'm with you!" declared Sammie.

"So am I!" cried the other boys.

This decision made Tommy feel better, and he looked with more pleasure at the marching scouts. Soon those came along belonging to the patrol in Riverdale. They did not make as fine a showing as the others, for they had not had as much practice. But they did very well.

"Maybe they'll take us in their band," suggested Joie.

"We can ask 'em, anyhow," said Tommy.

The line of marching boys was nearly at an end now, and Tommy and his chums, realizing this, started off for the park, or public square, in order to get good places from which to watch the various events of the day. Many other persons did the same thing.

Tommy and his chums, talking over what they called their "hard luck," in not being able to join the scouts, came to the

park. It was already well filled with spectators, and some of the first patrols of the scouts had arrived and taken the places set aside for them.

The centre of the park had been roped off, and in this space would be held the different events—relay races, water-boiling and fire-making contests, work in first aid to the injured, target practice, and the like.

This time Tommy and the Riverdale boys were able to get places in the front rank, next to the rope, so that there was no need for standing on any boxes.

A little later the boys who had taken part in the marching came filing into the park, going to their different places. Some had tents set up, and there was one large canvas structure for the use of the national officials, and those in charge of the event.

A platform had been put up in the park, and from this several speeches were made. I cannot say that the boys were much interested in them, but they listened as well as they could.

Then came the events that were eagerly watched by Tommy and his chums. In the relay race the patrol from Riverdale took part, but they did not make a very good showing, and another patrol, from an adjoining town, won.

"We could do as good as those Riverdale fellows," said Tommy, when the race was over.

"Sure we could," declared Sammie.

The water-boiling contest was interesting. Several boys, picked out from each patrol, were selected to take part. Each boy was given some wood and paper, and three matches. The boy who first brought to a boiling point some water in a tin pail, suspended over the fire he had made, won the contest. If he used up his three matches without getting a blaze, he lost, and had to give up.

The water-boiling contest was interesting.

As there was quite a wind blowing it was not easy to light the piles of paper and sticks on the ground. Some boys succeeded, others failed. Only one from the Riverdale patrol got his fire going, but he had bad luck, for the water in his pail would not boil in time to let him win. This contest went to the organization to which belonged Donald Berry, the boy Tommy had directed on his way.

The contest in giving help to a boy who pretended to be hurt, caused lots of fun. From the ranks a boy stepped out, walked along a little way, and then suddenly fell to the ground. He pretended that he had broken his leg.

At once there rushed up to him some of his chums. With pieces of cloth, together with some branches of trees, they bound up the pretended broken leg, just as they would have done if it had been really hurt. Then they carried their friend on a litter made by putting poles through the arms of their coats. There was considerable joking about the boy who was supposed to be hurt, but he did not mind that.

"I'm getting a free ride!" he said, with a laugh.

Then came some target practice with bows and arrows. This interested Tommy and his chums very much, and they agreed among themselves that if they ever became boy scouts that they would try for archery honors.

There were several more events and contests, but by this time it was getting rather late, and Tommy and his chums had some distance to go home.

"I guess we'd better start," suggested Sammie, after a bit.

"That's right. I don't want to be late for supper," spoke Joie, while the others laughed.

On their way home Tommy and his chums were overtaken by the members of the Riverdale patrol, who were marching briskly along, having finished their part in the program.

"Hello, Dick!" cried Sammie, to one of the marchers whom he knew. "Got any vacant places in your crowd?"

"What do you mean?" asked the other.

"I mean is there a chance for us fellows to join your patrol? We'd like to be boy scouts, too."

"That's right," chimed in Tommy. "Could you take us in?"

"Huh! Listen to that, would you!" jeered Dick. "Why, you little fellows couldn't be boy scouts!"

"We can row a boat—and win a race!" declared Tommy, stoutly. "I don't see why we couldn't be scouts."

"You're not old enough!" answered Dick. "We couldn't be carrying you in our arms every time we went on a hike."

"You wouldn't have to!" cried Tommy. "I guess we could march as well as you!"

"You could not!" said another of the larger boys. "You're regular babies!"

"We're almost eleven!" insisted Tommy.

"Well, you have to be twelve before you can be scouts," spoke a third member of the patrol. "It's too bad; but that's the rule." He was more kindly in tone than the others.

"All right—if we can't join—I suppose we can't," said Tommy, with a sigh. "We can wait, though."

"That's all you can do," went on the boy who had spoken gently. "We'll take you in as soon as you reach the right age."

The patrol marched on, and Tommy and his chums struck into the woods to take a short cut home. This time they followed the blazed trail which they had noted before, and did not become lost.

They were about half way through the woods when they heard, coming from another direction, the sound of marching feet. A little later they saw another patrol of boy scouts, and

Tommy recognized Donald Berry, the lad whom he had directed earlier that day.

"Hello!" exclaimed that boy. "There's my young friend. Well, I found my way all right, and got there in time. I won my target contest, too."

"That's good," said Tommy. "Did you blaze this trail through the woods?"

"Yes, I always do that when I go through a new place. You never can tell when you want to come back the same way."

"It helped us a lot," said Sammie. "We got lost ourselves."

"Then I'm glad I made it. Did you see the doings?"

"Yes, they were fine!" exclaimed Tommy.

"Why don't you fellows join?" asked Donald, while his patrol stopped to drink at a woodland spring.

"They tell us we're too young—we'd like to, but we're not old enough," answered Tommy. "The patrol from our town just turned us down."

"Too bad, but it can't be helped," responded Donald. "Well, maybe we'll see you again sometime."

## CHAPTER V

### TOMMY'S OWN PATROL

TOMMY stopped in a book store on his way home, after leaving his chums. The proprietor, Mr. Johnson, who knew Tommy quite well, stepped up to wait on him.

"Well, Tommy," said he, "what will it be this time? A book about hunting Indians, or something about cowboys?" He laughed as he spoke.

"Neither one, this time," said our hero, as he glanced around at the tables and shelves filled with books. "Have you anything about the boy scouts?"

"Boy scouts? Hum, let me see. Why, yes, we've lots of books about the scouts. Here's one called: 'The Boy Scouts in Africa,' and another one, 'The Boy Scouts on Parade.'"

"No," said Tommy slowly, "I want a book that tells how to *become* a boy scout; and all that."

"Oh, I see! Then you want the official handbook."

"That's it!" cried Tommy, for he had heard some of the older boys speaking about it. "That's the one I want. How much is it?"

"Fifty cents, Tommy."

"Whew! I thought it was only a quarter. That's all I've got."

Mr. Johnson hesitated a moment. Tommy and his friends were among his best boy customers, and Mrs. Tiptop often spent considerable money in the bookstore.

"Well, Tommy," said the merchant, "business is business,

but I'll tell you what I'll do. You may have the book for a quarter, and you can pay me the other twenty-five cents when you get it."

"All right. That's fine! I know I can earn it somehow, for I get ten cents a week for weeding my mother's flower bed. I'll pay you as soon as I can."

"That's all right. I know you will. Take it along."

So Tommy, paying over his quarter, and owing twenty-five cents, took the boy scout manual home with him. He was so eager to read it that he opened the pages and looked them over as he walked along. Thus it so happened that he did not see where he was going, and, the first thing he knew, he had collided with a rather stout gentleman who was hurrying along the street in the opposite direction.

"Ugh!" grunted Tommy, and he was almost thrown down by the collision. His scout book fell from his hands.

"Bless my soul! What does this mean? Running into a person in this manner! Why, boy, what ails you?"

Tommy looked up, to see Joie Grubb's father puffing and panting in front of him.

"I—I beg your pardon," stammered Tommy. "I didn't mean to!"

"Hum! You're polite about it, at all events," remarked Mr. Grubb. "That's what I like to see."

"Yes, sir," answered Tommy, with a smile. "All boy scouts must be polite. At least it says courteous in the book, and I guess being polite means the same thing."

"Indeed it does, Tommy," spoke Mr. Grubb, with a laugh, as he rubbed his side where Tommy's head had struck him. "But I didn't know you were a scout. I thought you had to wear a uniform, and leggings, and all that, to belong."

"You do, sometimes, when you're a regular scout," went on Tommy. "But I'm not. I'm too young, they say. Anyhow

I thought I could practice some of the things a scout does, whether I was one or not."

"And I dare say you can—I dare say you can," spoke Mr. Grubb, musingly. "Yes, that's a good idea, being polite, anyhow. Well, I must be getting on. Oh, by the way, is my Joie a scout?"

"No, sir," answered Tommy. "He and I, and some of the boat club members, wanted to be, but we'll have to wait a year."

"Hum! That's too bad. Well, you don't have to wait a year to be polite, that's one good thing," laughed Mr. Grubb, as he walked on.

Tommy picked up his scout book, and hurried home. He was very quiet that evening, especially after he had read the rules and regulations concerning those who could be members of the boy scouts. Tommy sighed once or twice.

"What's the matter?" asked Nellie who was sitting near him, sewing her doll's dress. "Are you sick, Tommy?"

"Nope," he answered, and that was all. He sat staring at a picture on the wall, but not seeing it. Tommy was doing some hard thinking.

A little later he sighed again. This time his father looked up from his paper and asked:

"Well, Tommy, has your boat sprung a leak, or has the club disbanded?"

"Neither one, Daddy," was the answer, and still Tommy did not smile. "The boat club's all right, and so is the boat."

"I know what's the matter with him," said Mrs. Tiptop, looking up from her sewing. "He went over to Parkville to-day, and he walked too far and ate something he ought not to."

"No, mother, really I didn't!" exclaimed Tommy, earnestly. "I ate just what you told me to—soup and some

bread and milk. And the walk wasn't far at all. Only we got lost in the woods, and had to find the blazed trail to get out."

"Ha! A blazed trail; eh?" exclaimed Mr. Tiptop. "What do you know about blazed trails, Tommy?"

"Not much," confessed the small lad. "But a boy scout made it. We were over to see the boy scouts drill," he added.

"Oh, ho!" exclaimed Mr. Tiptop. "That boy scout business is a fine idea. I wish it had been going when I was a boy. I'd have joined quickly enough. Why don't you join, Tommy, if you like it? I think it would be a good idea."

Then Tommy told his troubles. Mr. Tiptop listened patiently, and said:

"Perhaps those boys were only trying to play a joke on you. Maybe you young boys could join the scouts after all."

"I don't think so—not according to the book," answered Tommy. "It says here twelve years, plainly enough."

"Let me see," suggested Mr. Tiptop, and when he had read some of the rules in the handbook he passed it back to Tommy with the remark:

"Yes, I guess you're right. You boys are too young to join. But that won't stop you from being a boy scout."

"Why not," asked Tommy in surprise, wondering if his father had some plan of getting around the regulations.

"Because, while you can't officially become a boy scout, and wear the regular uniform, there's no law to prevent you starting a patrol of your own. You can do everything a boy scout does except to be officially recognized and have the regular badges.

"But you can study how to make blazed trails, you can study wood-craft, and anything else you like. You can go on 'hikes' as the walking tours are called, and you and your friends can go camping. In short you can be boy scouts in almost every

sense of the word, and when the time comes, when you are old enough to join the real organization, you'll be that much ahead."

"Say! That's a good idea!" cried Tommy in delight. "I believe I'll do it! I'll see some of the fellows, and get them to join my patrol. We can do the things the book tells of, even if we don't belong to the regular crowd."

"Can you have uniforms?" asked Nellie. "I think it's so much nicer if the boys wear uniforms."

"Well, maybe we couldn't get the same uniforms the regular scouts have," answered Tommy, "but I don't s'pose there's any law against having some sort of a suit, something like theirs. I'll see about that later. Anyhow, as we intend to become regular scouts later, they can't find any fault."

"I shouldn't think so," spoke Mr. Tiptop. "And I'll do all I can to help you, Tommy."

"And I'll sew buttons on your uniform when they come off," agreed Nellie.

"Thanks—both of you!" laughed Tommy. He got up from his seat and started for the hall.

"Where are you going?" asked his mother.

"Over to see Sammie and some of the boys. I want to tell them what I'm going to do."

"Oh, don't be in such a hurry," exclaimed Mr. Tiptop, with a smile. "Think it over a while. Besides, it's late now, and some of the boys may be in bed, even if you're not. Just sleep on that a night or two."

But one night's consideration was enough for Tommy. The more he thought of the plan his father had suggested the better he liked it. Early the next morning Tommy was giving his call out in front of Sammie's house.

"I say, Sammie! Come out. I've got something to tell you!"

"What is it?" asked Sammie, as he caught up his cap and came out on the run. "Going for a row?"

"No, but I'm going to start a boy scout patrol. Want to join it? We'll have some fun."

"Of course I want to join, but we're not old enough."

"Listen to this," said Tommy, and he outlined the plan his father had mentioned to him.

"Say! That's great!" cried Sammie. "I don't see why we can't do that. Come on, let's go see some of the other boys."

Joie Grubb, Georgie Pennington, Frank Bonder and Teddy Bunker who, with Sammie and Tommy, had formed the boat crew, at once fell in with the idea. Then some other members of the boat club were spoken to about it, and they agreed to join Tommy's organization of boy scouts, which, of course, would not be a regular one.

But it was in no way opposed to the official organization. In fact Tommy hoped to work in with the regular patrol, and as long as it was the intention of himself and his chums to become boy scouts as soon as they could, he believed no harm would be done.

"Well, then it's settled," said Sammie, as the boys talked the matter over. "We'll have a boy scout patrol. Now then, let's go have a ball game."

"I'd rather settle more about this first," said Tommy. "Why not go to our boathouse and have a meeting instead of playing ball? We can do that any time. Let's get started."

"That's what I say," declared Joie. "If we're going to have uniforms we'll want them soon. Then we can plan what to do this Summer. Only, Tommy, if we go on any hikes I hope they won't be too far, and that we'll have something to eat on the way."

"There you go again!" cried Tommy, with a laugh. "Always thinking of something to eat, Joie."

"What are you going to call your patrol?" asked Georgie. "Have you thought of a name, Tommy?"

"No, I hadn't. Wait though—hold on. There's that fox I shot when we were at Hemlock Island this Spring. I'll call it the Fox Patrol—no, the Silver Fox Patrol—that sounds better."

"Three cheers for Tommy Tiptop and his Silver Fox Patrol!" cried Sammie, and the boys joined in with a will.

## CHAPTER VI

### TOMMY'S BRAVE ACT

"WELL, now, if we're going to have a boy scout patrol, and do things the way the other fellows do them, what about a scout master?" asked Sammie, when he, Tommy and the other boys were sitting in their club rooms over the boathouse owned by Mr. Wentworth, the hardware merchant. My old readers will probably remember that it was he who gave Tommy the boat, and who allowed the boys to use the rooms over his boathouse on the river for their club meetings.

"Yes, I guess we do have to have a scout master," said Georgie. "At least the other boy scouts do."

"But we're not regular scouts," said Tommy. "I don't believe we'd have to have a regular scout master."

"Oh, we'll have to have some older person with us," spoke Joie Grubb. "My folks won't let me go off camping alone, though I wish they would."

"How about your cousin, Frank?" asked Tommy. "Mr. Watson was so kind to us in showing us how to row, maybe he'd teach us how to be boy scouts."

"I think he would do it," answered Frank. "He's coming to pay us another visit soon, and I'll ask him, if you like."

"We sure do like," said Tommy, with a laugh. "If we can get him it will be fine."

"And when we get our patrol we'll try and have a contest with the regular patrol from this town," went on Sammie.

"Contest? What sort of a contest?" asked Teddy Bunker.

"Why we'll march against them, do some military movements, have a relay race, shoot arrows, and build campfires."

"If we could only have real guns," sighed Joie.

"That's against the scout laws," said Tommy promptly. "No firearms are allowed. One thing the boy scouts are trying to do is to make better archers of themselves. I'm going to get a bow as soon as I can."

"So am I!" cried the other boys.

"I guess it's more fun shooting with bows and arrows, anyhow," spoke Joie. "They don't make so much noise, and make a fellow jump when they go off."

"If you jumped a little more you wouldn't be so fat," said Sammie, and then he dodged down behind a chair, to get out of the way of a book the fat boy threw at him.

"Well, if we can get Mr. Watson that will be fine," said Tommy, when quiet had settled down once more.

"I'm sure he'd help us," said Frank Bonder. "I'll write to him and find out when he's coming to visit me again."

"I hope it's soon," spoke Tommy. "We want to get started as soon as we can. There's lots to do."

"Say, do we have to work hard?" asked Joie Grubb, as he tried to find a more easy spot on the lounge where he was stretched out.

"Work! I should say so!" cried Tommy. "We have to drill, and pass examinations, go off on hikes, build fires, and always be prepared. That's what a boy scout has to do."

"Be prepared for what?" asked Joie, sitting up.

"For anything," replied Tommy. "That's what the scout movement is for, the book says. To make us fellows ready for anything that comes along. I guess the real thing is to train us for fighting, in case there's a war."

Joie Grubb got up from the couch more quickly than he had

moved in some time. He looked around for his hat, and, finding it, started down the stairs.

"Here! where you going?" asked Tommy. "What's the matter?"

"I don't want to be a boy scout," said Joie decidedly, over his shoulder.

"You don't? Why not? I thought you liked the idea."

"I do, but I'm not going to war!" exclaimed Joie, going down one step. "I never could live on dry bread and water, and that's all the soldiers get in war time. So if there's going to be a war, and we've got to fight, I'm not going to be a scout. You can count me out."

"Oh, come back!" cried Tommy.

"Listen to him!" laughed Sammie.

"You're crazy!" exclaimed Georgie.

"There isn't going to be any war," added Frank.

"Tommy said there was," spoke Joie, pausing half way down the stairs.

"I did not!" exclaimed the young leader. "I just said I thought the idea of the boy scouts was to have us prepared in case war *did* come; some time after we grow up to be men, you know."

"Oh, that's different," agreed Joie. "I thought you meant we had to get ready to fight soon."

"Of course not!" answered Tommy. "And, really, I don't believe the men who started the boy scouts favor war, either. I only spoke of fighting because we have to do some things, such as drilling, just like the soldiers do."

"Oh, that's all right then," admitted Joie. "I guess I'll belong to the scouts, after all."

"You gave me a scare," laughed Tommy, as the fat boy came back to his place. "I thought maybe you were all going to desert me."

"I guess not, Tommy!" cried Sammie. "We're with you in this boy scout business. I think it will be great, even if we can't belong to the regular patrol."

The boys talked for some little time longer over their plans, and Frank Bonder promised to write to his cousin at once, asking Mr. Watson to help them organize their patrol, and act as their scout master.

"Well, there's nothing more we can do now," went on Tommy. "We'll ask some of the fellows of the boat club if they want to join. Now let's go out on the balcony and see how the river looks."

"I wish we could look at it from the boat," suggested Sammie. "Couldn't we go for a row?"

"We could if we had some older person to go out with us," said Tommy. "But you know we promised all our folks that we wouldn't go on the water unless we had someone else in the boat."

"That's right," sighed Georgie. "But I would like a row."

The boathouse, in the upper story of which the club rooms were located, had a large balcony in front, overhanging the river. On this balcony were chairs and settees, and on them the boys were soon lounging, looking across the stream, on which were several sailing boats, one or two motor craft and a number of rowboats, all some distance out.

"It sure is a fine day for a sail," said Tommy. "Maybe if we went looking around we could find someone who would go out with us in the boat."

"That's a good idea," said Sammie. "Suppose we——"

But he did not finish what he started to say, because at that moment there echoed over the water a shrill cry—a cry of fear.

"What's that?" gasped Tommy Tiptop, jumping to his feet.

"It sounded like girls yelling," spoke Joie.

"It was," said Sammie. "Look—over there—that boat! Someone has fallen out of it!"

"And they're holding on to the sides," added Georgie.

"They're small girls!" went on Tommy. "Fellows, there's been an accident!

Once more across the water came the cry:

"Help! Help!"

Tommy Tiptop started for the stairs that led to the lower part of the boathouse, under which the rowing craft of his boat club was kept.

"Where you going?" cried Sammie.

"I'm going to try and save whoever is drowning!"

"But you can't! You can't swim out that far! Come back! Maybe someone else will save them."

"There isn't any other boat near," answered Tommy, as he continued on. "We've got to do it ourselves!"

"But how?" demanded Sammie. "It's too far to swim!"

"We'll have to go in our boat!" said Tommy quietly. "I know we promised our folks that we'd never go out on the river unless we had some older person in with us. But this is different. We've got to save a life, and we must take some chances. Who's with me?"

"I am!" was the cry from each boy.

"Then come on!" cried Tommy.

Down the stairs he rushed, followed by the others. Out on the river could be seen the drifting boat, in which was seated a small girl, while in the water, with upstretched hands clinging to the side of the craft, were two others who had fallen overboard.

"We're going to save them!" cried Tommy.

## CHAPTER VII

### TOMMY'S FIRST HIKE

ONCE Tommy Tiptop had made the start toward the rescue, his chums were not a moment behind him. Their boat floated in the water just outside the boathouse dock, where it had been put that day by one of Mr. Wentworth's men, who thought the boys might want to use it.

"Quick now!" cried Tommy. "We've got to hurry. Sammie, you get out the oars. Joie, see that the rudder is all right. You steer, Joie. We're going to row fast, and you might get winded."

"Shall I put in the cushions?" asked Joie, as he did what Tommy had ordered.

"No, we haven't time to stop for them. The bare seats are good enough. Come on, now!"

By this time the boys had piled into the boat. Tommy took his place nearest the stern, which was always his position, and Joie went to the broad rear seat where he could pull on the rudder lines and so guide the craft without having the rowers look over their shoulders every now and then to keep on a straight course.

Sammie Sandlass took his seat on the same one where Tommy sat, the boat being wide enough, and the boys small enough, to sit two on a seat and row with one oar each.

"All ready?" asked Teddy Bunker, who was in the bow, loosening the rope by which the boat was tied.

"All ready!" cried Tommy. "Let her go!"

"All ready", cried Tommy, "let her go!"

The boat drifted away from the dock, and the boys dipped their oars in the water.

"Give way—hard!" cried Captain Tommy, in imitation of the manner in which Mr. Watson used to direct the efforts of the lads. "Head right for the girls, Joie, and keep a straight course!"

"Aye, aye, sir!" answered fat Joie, sailor fashion, as he slipped the tiller lines over his shoulders, holding them in front of him, ready to shift the boat one way or the other. Joie peered anxiously ahead so as to steer the straightest course for the scene of the accident, and, as you boys well know, a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.

The boys bent to the oars, moving backward and forward in unison, as they pulled hard on the handles. All thought that they were doing something which had been forbidden them passed from their minds now. They knew their parents would not object when they learned the necessity.

"Are we getting there, Joie?" panted Tommy, after a few minutes of hard rowing.

"Yes," answered the fat steersman.

Other boats had now started for the scene of the accident, the occupants of them having noticed the plight of the girls. But the boat of Tommy and his chums was closest.

The girls, now that they saw aid on the way, had stopped crying for help, but they were still probably very much frightened. The river, at the point where they had fallen in, was quite deep, and there was considerable current. Not far away was a grist-mill, with a flume ending in a large wheel, and there was some danger that the boat with the girls clinging to it, and the one crouching down in the bottom, might drift in that direction. In that case the girls would very likely be hurt.

But Tommy made up his mind that he would get to the boat before this happened, and save the girls.

"Row a little faster, fellows!" he called. "Just make believe we're in a race, beating the boys from Millton."

Tommy's chums needed no urging. They pulled hard on the oars, and the boat shot forward.

"We're getting there!" cried Joie Grubb. "A few more strokes and we'll have 'em!"

Joie could not make out the features of the girls. The one in the boat he knew to be Mabel Ross, but the others were strangers to him.

"Oh, hurry! Please hurry!" cried Mabel.

"We're coming!" answered Joie, leaning forward as though he could push the boat onward in that way.

"I—I can't hold on any longer!" gasped one of the girls in the water.

"Neither can I!" said the other.

"You must! You must!" insisted Mabel. "If you let go—either of you—I'll never speak to you again—so there!"

It was a regular girl's threat, but it seemed to have a good effect, for the two in the water took firmer holds of the edges of the boat.

"Easy now," cautioned Tommy, as his craft came up alongside the other. "Don't bump 'em!"

"No, don't do that, whatever you do, for mercy sakes! Our boat leaks anyhow."

"How did it happen?" asked Joie Grubb, as he steered a little closer.

"I don't know—none of us knows. It all happened so quickly!" exclaimed Mabel. "Oh, do save us!"

"We will," said Tommy. "But be careful now. Don't move too suddenly, and do just as I tell you. I'll put my

boat right up against yours, Mabel, and then you get in. But move slowly, and don't jump."

"Oh, can't you save Grace and Hattie first?" asked Mabel, with true unselfishness.

"It would be better to take you out of your boat first," said Sammie. "That will make your boat lighter, and it will rise higher in the water. That will make it easier to get the others into our boat."

"That's the idea," said Tommy. "Steady now. Hold the two boats together, fellows. Haul in your oars on the outside there."

The boys on the side nearest the leaking boat had already pulled in their blades. The others now did the same.

When Tommy, Sammie, Georgie and Teddy had grasped the edge of the other boat, holding it close to their own, Tommy called:

"Now Mabel, get in here!"

Slowly and carefully Mabel got over the side. Her dress was wet where she had been crouching down in the water in the bottom of her boat, and her face showed the fear she felt.

"We'll have you out in a second now!" called Tommy to the two other girls. "I want to pull you in over the stern. It will be safer. Get up in the bow, Joie and Sammie, and sit steady."

In getting a person from the water into a boat it is generally safer, in the case of a small craft, to pull them in, or let them climb in, over the bow or stern. In this way the tilting of the boat will do no harm. But if a boat is tipped to one side or the other it may turn over.

Tommy and his chums worked their boat around until the broad stern was close to where the girls were clinging.

"One at a time," directed Tommy.

"Then you go, Grace," said Hattie. "I feel all right now. I can hold on a long time yet."

"That's the way to talk!" exclaimed Sammie.

The girls were older than the boys, but in this time of trouble Tommy and his chums took charge of matters. Soon Grace had been helped into the bigger boat, and then Hattie came in. Both were wet from head to foot, for they had fallen into the water, and gone under. Fortunately they had come up close to their boat and had managed to grasp the sides.

"Now we're all right!" cried Tommy, cheerfully. "We'll soon have you ashore."

"What about their boat?" asked Sammie.

"Let it drift—it won't come to much harm, and someone else may pick it up," answered Tommy. "Now then, boys, row hard!"

But there was no need for Tommy's chums to do this. For among several boats that by this time had reached the scene of the accident and rescue was a motorboat, in which was Jack Fordyce, a muskrat trapper, whom the boys knew well.

"That's the time you did something worth while, Tommy Tiptop!" exclaimed Jack, as he brought his craft to a stop. "I was watching you and I tried to get here in time to save the girls, but you got ahead of me. I'll take the girls in my boat, if you like."

"Oh, we wouldn't change now for the world!" cried Mabel. "I'm only too glad to be in any kind of a boat that doesn't leak."

"And I'm not going to change," added Hattie. She and her chum, who had fallen into the water, were crying a little.

"Then let me tow you to shore," suggested the muskrat trapper. "You'll get there quicker that way."

They all agreed this was a good plan, and soon Tommy's

boat, containing the members of his club and the rescued girls, was being pulled rapidly through the water by the motor craft.

"How did it all happen?" asked Tommy, when they were nearing the dock, close to Mabel's house.

"It was our fault," said Hattie. "My handkerchief fell in the water, and Grace and I both reached for it. The next we knew some water began running in the boat, and a second later Grace and I fell out. Oh, how frightened we were!"

"And so was I!" added Mabel. "We ought not to have gone out so far, but it was such a nice day, and we wanted to row."

"Well, you're all right now," said Tommy, with a smile.

One of the other boats, that had come to help in the rescue, had secured the drifting craft that the girls had left, and was towing it in. A little later the girls reached shore, and, pausing only a moment to thank their rescuers, they hurried to their homes.

"We'll see you again, and thank you better!" called Mabel, as she ran along with her chums.

"Oh, that's all right," laughed Tommy.

"Shall I tow you boys down to your dock?" asked the muskrat trapper.

"If you don't mind," answered Tommy, for he, like the others, was tired, almost as much from the excitement as from the rowing. Accordingly they again set off, being pulled by the powerful little motorboat, and soon they were again at their club house, talking over what had happened.

Tommy's folks, as well as the parents of the other boys, easily excused them for disobeying orders in regard to going out in the boat without an older person being along.

"You did just right, under the circumstances," said Mr. Tiptop. "I'm proud of you, Tommy."

Several days passed. The rescued girls, as well as their parents, formally thanked the boys, and later each of the girls made an embroidered pennant for the boat club.

One day Frank Bonder called on Tommy with a letter.

"Good news!" he cried. "My cousin is coming back, and he's agreed to act as our scout master until we are old enough to join the regular organization!"

"That's fine!" exclaimed Tommy. "Now we'll get our uniforms, and begin to practice. We must do some hiking, too."

On consultation with their parents, the boys decided to get a simple brown uniform, somewhat like that of the boy scouts, but without infringing on the rights of that society. They agreed to arm themselves with bows and arrows, and, in order that they might be in line for archery badges later, each boy made his own weapon.

In due time the uniforms came and the boys were delighted with them. They had leggings and knapsacks also, and really looked very much like real boy scouts.

Mr. Watson, who knew considerable about the duties of a scout master, as well as those of the scouts, took the boys in hand and gave them some simple drills to go through. He also began a course in "wood-craft."

"For we will go on hikes, and maybe camp out later," he said.

Tommy's first hike came one Saturday afternoon. The boys started in the morning, and were to go to a place called Eagle Mountain, though really it was only a large hill. There they were to cook their dinner. Each boy took along a piece of beefsteak, some potatoes to roast, and some bread and butter, as well as a tin cup, a tin plate and a knife, fork and spoon.

"Forward, march!" cried Captain Tommy, and off they started on their first hike.

## CHAPTER VIII

### TOMMY'S CAMP DINNER

THERE were ten boys in Tommy Tiptop's Silver Fox Patrol. The young captain knew that in the regular scout organization patrol there were but eight, but Tommy said it did not matter, as two might drop out before they became regular scouts. Tommy had been unanimously elected patrol leader, and Sammie Sandlass was the assistant. Mr. Watson was the scout master.

Of course Tommy's patrol was without many of the things which a regular patrol would have had, but those things could come later. And as Tommy marched at the head of his little patrol, he felt very proud, and glad that he had started it.

"Are we marching too fast for you, Joie?" asked Tommy, after a while. Tommy was thoughtful, and he was also aware of the fact that no body of men or boys can march any faster or longer than the weakest or slowest member can go.

"Oh, I can keep up," laughed Joie. "I guess it will do me good to walk some of my fat off."

"Well, don't walk it on me!" exclaimed Frank Bonder, as Joie trod on his heels just then. "Walk it off on someone else, Joie."

Along the dusty road went Tommy's patrol. Each boy carried his bow, while at his back was slung a quiver containing arrows. Some of them were not very straight, and some of the bows would not shoot very far. But everything has to

have a beginning and the boys made up their minds that in time they would become good archers.

Tommy carried the official banner of his patrol. It consisted of a small blue flag, on a staff, and in the centre of the flag was what was intended for a silver fox. Tommy had made the picture himself, and his mother had worked it with silk. But the truth of the matter is that it looked very little like a fox. However, the animal had a large, bushy tail, and, after all, that is the chief way in which to tell it from a dog—at least Tommy said so, and he ought to know.

The boys marched on, cutting through the woods where Tommy and his chums had once become lost. As they emerged on the other side, and took a road going toward Eagle Mountain, they met one of the regular boy scouts from Riverdale. He was driving in a carriage, and seemed much surprised when he met Tommy and his chums.

"Hello!" cried this boy, James Blake by name, "what right have you fellows got to pretend that you're scouts?" He seemed quite indignant.

"We're not pretending," said Tommy quietly. "And I guess we've got as much right to go off on a march as you fellows have."

"Huh! Trying to imitate us—that's what you're trying to do."

"Well, maybe we'd beat you, if it came to a contest," retorted Tommy. "We're going to learn to do things the same way you scouts do, for we're going to join the scouts later. I guess there's no law against that—is there?"

"I don't care! I'm going to report you to the national headquarters—pretending to be scouts when you're not," went on James.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you," said Mr. Watson, quietly. "These boys are not doing anything underhanded.

They are not scouts, it is true, but they are practicing to become such. And, if I remember rightly, it is one of the scout laws to be kind and considerate to others. I hardly think you are living up to that law."

The other flushed a moment. Then he got down out of the carriage and, advancing toward Mr. Watson, held out his hand, and said:

"I beg your pardon—all of you. I did forget my scout obligation, I guess. I was a little excited. Of course you boys have a right to practice the things we do, and when the time comes I'm sure we'll be glad to have you in our organization."

"That sounds better," exclaimed Mr. Watson, with a smile. "We'll call bygones bygones."

"Where are you going?" asked the scout.

"We're on our first hike," explained Tommy, all resentment now gone. "And we're going to cook a camp dinner."

"I wish I could be with you," said the other. "I'm beginning to get hungry myself. But I'm on some business for my father, and I can't stop."

He drove on, while Tommy's patrol resumed its march.

Soon they came to the foot of the big hill that was called Eagle Mountain.

"We'll take a little rest before we tackle that," suggested Mr. Watson.

"I'm going to get a drink!" exclaimed fat Joie Grubb, starting toward a bubbling spring, and wiping his hot face as he went.

"No, don't drink now!" exclaimed Mr. Watson. "Wait a bit!"

"But I'm awful thirsty," said Joie. "And hot, too."

"So am I!" added several of the boys.

"That's just the reason I don't want you to drink," ex-

plained the scout master, as I shall call him though really he was not such. "You are warm and tired, and if you put cold water into your stomach now you will chill it so suddenly that you may be made ill. Always rest in the shade before you drink, when you are tired and warm. And never drink cold water too fast. Give your stomach a chance to cool off gradually."

This was good advice, and the boys appreciated it. But it was hard to sit there and look at the cold, bubbling water, and not take some. Finally, however, Mr. Watson said they had waited long enough.

"Whew! But that's good!" exclaimed Sammie, as he drained his tin cup.

"Water is the best thirst-quencher in the world," said the scout master. "Ginger ale, lemonade and all those things are nice and refreshing, as well as good under certain conditions, but water is always the best and safest."

"Shall we march on?" asked Tommy, who was anxious to get at the work of cooking the dinner.

"Yes," assented Mr. Watson. "Go ahead!"

Slowly they went up the big hill. On the way they stopped to look at curious insects on the ground, or to pick up odd stones. Mr. Watson was getting the boys interested in nature study.

Rather tired and warm, but full of boyish spirits and energy, the young scouts reached the top of the hill. They paused for a moment to admire the view. They could see off for many miles.

"This would be a good place for a signal fire!" exclaimed Tommy Tiptop. "Maybe the Indians used to use it for that years ago."

"I would not be surprised," said Mr. Watson. "After we have our dinner we can look for Indian relics—arrow

heads, stone hatchets and the like. I used to have quite a collection of them."

It was decided to make three fires, in order that all the boys could cook their beefsteak and potatoes at once, instead of taking turns around one blaze. Sammie, who acted as assistant to Tommy, began piling up a large quantity of twigs and sticks.

"What are you doing?" asked Mr. Watson, pausing to look at the small chap, whose red hair stood up almost straight on his head.

"Making a fire," answered Sammie.

"It's too large," said the scout master. "You perhaps have heard what the old Indian said when he once saw a white man preparing to get a meal. 'Heap foolish man!' said the Indian. 'Make heap big blaze—so hot no can get near to cook him meat. Cook himself first.' You see he meant that the blaze was too big for comfort. And that is so. A small hot fire will cook meat just as well, and you can crouch close to it without getting burned or smoked. Let me show you."

Mr. Watson scooped out some dirt until he had a hole about a foot across and several inches deep. In the centre of this he stuck upright a dry piece of wood. Then some shavings were whittled into the hole about the stick, and dried twigs piled about in the shape of a wigwam. When a match was put to these they blazed up at once, and soon a small but hot fire was burning.

"There, now you can broil your meat over that, and yet not cook your face," said the scout master.

The boys were delighted with being thus shown, and soon there were several of the small fires going.

"You had better put your potatoes in a separate fire, and let them roast a while before broiling your pieces of steak," suggested Mr. Watson. "The potatoes will take longer to

cook. Meanwhile you can be getting some hot water for tea, and putting out your food, plates and things."

Mr. Watson had brought with him a tea pot, and some condensed milk, deciding to give the boys a drink of warm, weak tea with their meal.

A little later the appetizing smell of broiling steak floated out on the air.

"My, but that's good!" cried Tommy Tiptop, as he held his piece of meat nearer the fire. The boys were using long green sticks for toasting forks. In the ashes of another fire were the potatoes, roasting, and on some stones, set up in the form of a fireplace, the water was boiling for tea.

"We'll make tea the way the Chinese do," explained Mr. Watson.

"How's that?" asked Sammie.

"Put some dried tea leaves in a cup, and pour boiling water over them. Let them stand a few minutes and the tea is made. Never boil tea—that spoils it. Coffee can also be made that way, but it needs a special pot. Tea is simpler. But it isn't good for boys to drink too much strong tea, or coffee either. Though what I'm going to give you won't hurt you, I think."

The meal was almost ready, and one of the boys was raking the potatoes out of the fire. Tommy's piece of steak was almost cooked, when Joie Grubb cried out:

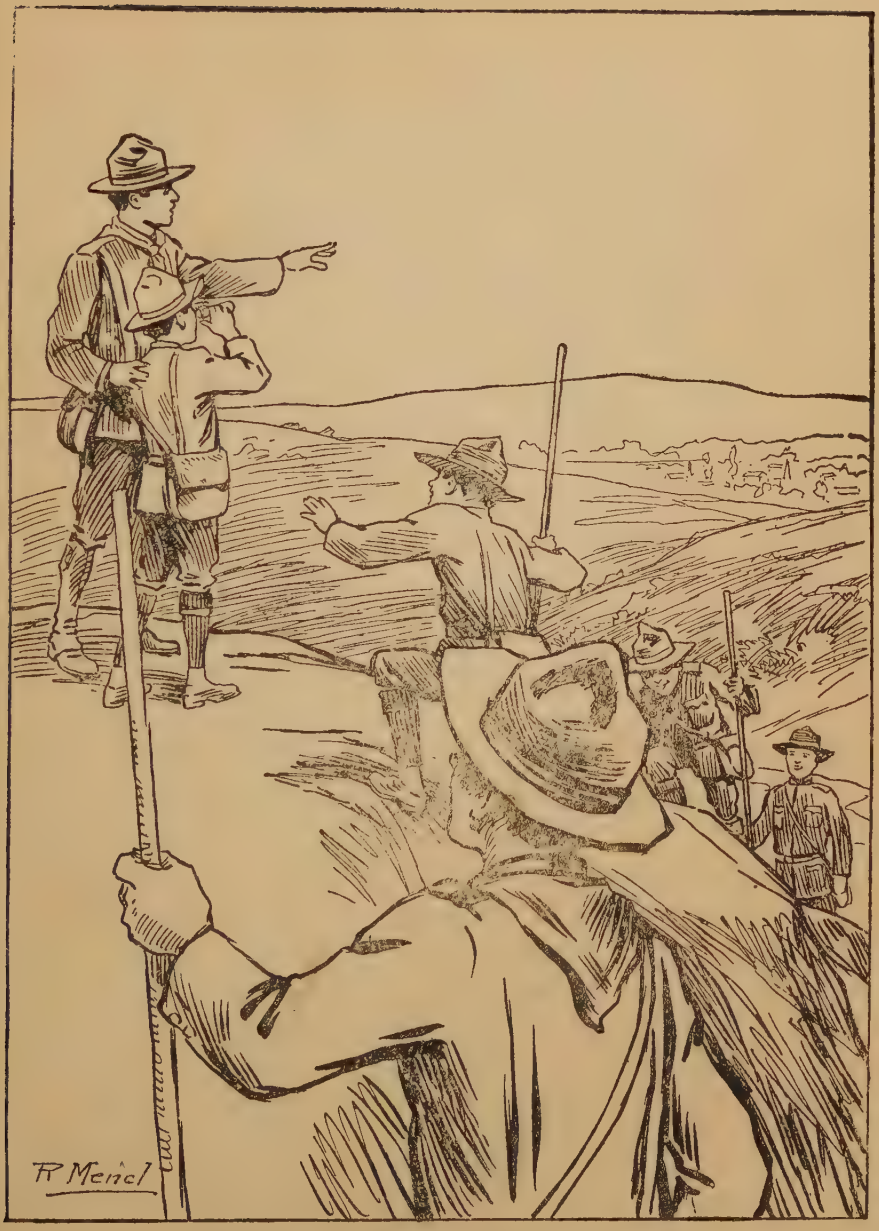
"Ouch! My eyes are full of smoke!"

He jumped back so suddenly that he knocked against Tommy's arm, and our hero's piece of meat dropped from the stick into the fire.

"Look there, Joie Grubb, what you did!" cried Tommy, in dismay.

"Well, I didn't mean to," was the fat boy's answer.

"Now I won't have any dinner!" cried Tommy.




They could see off for miles.

"That's good! Yank it out!" shouted Sammie, who had seen the accident. "Here, I'll get it for you, Tommy."

He thrust a pointed stick into the fire, and did succeed in spearing the chunk of broiled steak. Just as he lifted it out there was a loud barking, and a bulldog, savage enough looking, sprang from the bushes and started straight for the group of boys.

## CHAPTER IX

### TOMMY AND UNCLE ISAAC

"LOOK out!"

"Hit him with a stick!"

"He's savage all right!"

"Club him!"

Thus Tommy and his chums cried out as thy saw the bulldog making for them. Mr. Watson, who was busy some distance off, came running up.

"Don't hit him!" he cried. "Stand your ground—don't run. If he sees you run it will show him you're afraid and he may attack you. Stand still!"

The boys wavered for a moment, hardly knowing whether to stand their ground or not.

"Down sir! Down! Lie down!" called Mr. Watson, sharply to the animal.

The dog paused in its rush, looked over toward the scout master, and then, with a sudden leap, made straight for Sammie Sandlass.

"Look out!" cried Tommy.

"Get a bow and arrow and shoot him!" yelled Joie Grubb, running around in a circle, greatly excited.

But the dog had no intention of hurting anyone. Before Sammie could run, or leap to one side, the dog had made a jump for Tommy's piece of steak which Sammie still held out on the stick. In another second the dog had grabbed the meat, and he seemed to swallow it whole, so hungry was he. Then,

crouching down in front of Sammie, and wagging its tail, the dog looked up, as much as to say:

"Well, that sample was pretty good. Now I'll try a whole piece!"

"Well, what do you know about that!"

"The nerve of him!"

"Coming to dinner without being invited!"

Various boys gave voice to these expressions. They were no longer afraid, for the dog seemed quite friendly.

"He's got my meat!" exclaimed Tommy. "Now I won't have any dinner."

"Well, it was no good, anyhow," said Sammie. "I'm sorry he took it away from me, but——"

"Oh, it wasn't your fault," said Tommy, with a rueful smile. "You couldn't help it. But what makes you say my meat was no good—the dog ate it."

"Yes, but I guess you wouldn't," went on Sammie. "It was all covered with grit and ashes."

"Well then," spoke Tommy, with a sigh, "maybe it's just as well he did eat it. But I sure am hungry!"

The dog barked and wagged his stumpy tail, as though to say that he felt the same way about it.

"Go on now! Be off!" ordered Mr. Watson. "Where do you belong, anyhow?"

As if to answer this question a man, evidently a farmer, came out of the opening in the bushes from which the dog had appeared. At the sight of him the dog ran around barking, and showing delight at seeing his master.

"So this is where you ran to, did you, Towser?" asked the farmer. "I hope he didn't scare you," he went on, looking at the boys and Mr. Watson.

"Not much," answered Tommy, "only he got my dinner."

"He did? Towser, what did you do?" asked the man

sharply, and the dog cowered at his feet, cringing and whining.

"He took my beefsteak, but it had fallen into the fire," went on the young patrol leader.

"Oh, I see. You're boy scouts, on a hike," said the farmer. "Well, that's too bad. Suppose you come down to my house—it isn't far—and I'll give you all a good dinner to make up for it."

"Oh, thank you, that would be too much!" interposed Mr. Watson. "Besides I think we can find an extra piece of steak for Tommy Tiptop. It was all an accident."

"Well, I'm glad you look at it that way," said the farmer. "Towser is young, and doesn't know any better. He wouldn't hurt anyone. But I suppose the beefsteak was too much for him. I don't let him have much meat. I was on my way home to dinner from the field, and he must have heard you up here."

"I hope there's no objection to the boys having their camp dinner here," suggested Mr. Watson.

"Not in the least!" the man said quickly. "I own this land, and you're welcome to come as often as you like. I'll keep Towser tied up after this, when you cook your dinners."

"Oh, no, you needn't do that," replied Mr. Watson. "We'll be on the lookout next time. Here, Tommy, here's an extra piece of steak I brought along in case we needed it."

Tommy felt better now, and at once began to broil his meat. The pieces of the others were finished, and all was in readiness for the meal. Towser whined and looked from one boy to another.

"No, you don't!" exclaimed his master. "You come home with me. I hope you'll let me send you a pail of milk and some crullers," the farmer went on. "My wife bakes the best

doughnuts you ever ate. I'll send one of my hired men up here with some if you'll take them."

"Will we?" cried Tommy. "Boys, all in favor will please say so!"

"Aye!" came in a loud chorus.

"The ayes have it," announced Tommy, with a smile.

"I think you may send them up," remarked Mr. Watson, with a laugh.

"I'll be glad to," spoke the farmer. "Come Towser."

That the boys enjoyed their meal need not be said. True the meat in some cases was a little burned, and it all tasted more or less of smoke. And the scouts' hands and faces were well blackened by the burned potato skins.

But they minded none of those things, and ate with hearty appetites. When the simple meal was about over, along came a good-natured hired man with a large pail full of rich, cool milk, and another filled with brown crullers.

I leave you to imagine what the boys did to this unexpected dessert, and I do not believe you will have to think very hard to tell me the answer. You would probably have done the same thing.

Then followed a period of rest in the shade—"to let our dinners settle," as Joie Grubb said.

After that came some archery practice, the boys using their new bows and arrows. A target was set up some distance off, in a safe place, and at this they shot.

I cannot say that they made any remarkable scores, but each one did his best. They knew it would take practice to make good marksmen of themselves.

But Mr. Watson started them right, showing them how to stand with the centres of their heels in line with the target. He also showed them how to fit the arrow on the string and pull back the cord.

Most boys shoot by taking the notched arrow and the cord in their thumb and finger. This is not right. You should use the first three fingers of your hand, letting the arrow come between the first and second fingers. The thumb and little finger are not used. Hold the bow straight, and pull until the head of the arrow reaches the bent bow. Then let go by straightening out your bent fingers that you have used to pull back the cord with.

Thus Tommy and his chums learned the right way, and later on they were glad of it.

"Well, we'd better be starting back," suggested Mr. Watson, after a bit. "It's getting a little late, and I don't want to tire you on our first hike."

"It's been lots of fun," said Tommy Tiptop.

"Yes, even if you did lose your meat," added Sammie.

On the return they stopped at the farmhouse to leave the pails. They were empty, as I suppose you have guessed.

The farmer was off in his fields, but his wife was glad to see the boys, and gave them some cookies to eat on their way home. The bulldog was chained up, but he, too, seemed glad to see the boys. Perhaps he hoped they had more meat for him.

When about half way home Tommy saw, in the road ahead of him and his chums, a figure he was sure he knew.

"I believe that's Uncle Isaac," he said, and when he came up to the man this guess proved correct.

"Well, what will you boys be up to next?" the old hunter of Hemlock Island wanted to know, as he greeted Tommy and the others. "Are you soldiers?"

"Training to be boy scouts," answered the young patrol leader. "We've had our first hike, and we've learned some wood-lore."

"Wood-lore; eh? That's what I call plain common sense,"

said Uncle Isaac. "It's a good idea, too. Now what's the matter with you boys coming up to Hemlock Island again, and making a longer stay? You can camp there, and have all the wood-lore you want."

"That will be just fine!" exclaimed Mr. Watson. "I was hoping for a chance to go camping with the boys."

"Well, come up any time," invited Uncle Isaac. "Mr. Wentworth and his friends won't be using the cabin until Fall, and you might as well have some use of it. Come any time."

"We will!" promised Tommy Tiptop.

"Say, it's a fine thing he's your friend," spoke Sammie. "We can have no end of good times on Hemlock Island."

Once more the boys took up their homeward hike. They passed through the woods, using the blazed trail that had been so helpful to Tommy that day when they were lost. Then, as Mr. Watson had an engagement, he turned off on a side path to keep it, leaving Tommy to lead the scouts home alone.

"We'll take a short cut, across this field," decided Tommy, when they came to one owned by Mr. Bashford.

"Maybe the bull's there," suggested Joie.

"Of course he isn't!" said Tommy. "Can't I see all over?" and he paused on the fence to take a look. Certainly no bull seemed to be in sight, and the boys started across the meadow, that was deep with grass.

They were not more than half way across the field before Tommy, who had jumped over a small ditch, gave a cry of alarm.

"The bull! The bull! Here he comes, boys!"

With an angry bellow the maddened animal was rushing down on the group of boy scouts, as they gathered about their small leader.

# CHAPTER X

## TOMMY AND THE BRUSH FIRE

JUST why Joie Grubb should have imagined that the bull had singled him from among the others no one could tell, but it was a fact that the fat lad, who was in the midst of the others, suddenly darted out from the little ring, and started across the field alone.

Naturally this drew the attention of the bull to him, and the animal, changing his course, ran after Joie instead of charging down on the crowd of boy scouts.

"What are you doing, Joie?"

"Where you going?"

"Come back here!"

Thus Tommy and the others called after the fat lad. But Joie kept on.

Clearly Joie had lost his head in the excitement. On and on he ran, stumbling over the uneven ground, and the bull was constantly and slowly gaining on him.

And, to make matters worse, Joie wore about his neck a red handkerchief. Probably this was what had attracted the attention of the maddened animal as much as the fact that Joie ran out from the others. He had been warm from the march, and had tied the brilliant red "bandana" around his collar. Now this fluttered in the wind as Joie ran, flaming red in the eyes of the bull. Just why these animals, and turkey gobblers, seem to hate red so, no one has ever explained to my satisfaction, but it is generally true.

"Come back, Joie!"

"Lie down and then he won't chase you!"

"Throw a stone at him!"

"Take off that red handkerchief!"

These were only a few of the things Joie's chums called to him but he was too excited to listen to them. In fact he was in a panic of fear, rushing along, now and then looking over his shoulder to see how near the bull was to him.

The boys well knew the ugly temper of this animal, and for that reason always avoided crossing the meadow where he was kept. But they had not expected to see him in this field. In fact, of late, Farmer Bashford had been keeping his bull in a pasture further off.

"Boys, we've got to do something!" cried Tommy, as he saw Joie turning to go in another direction. In spite of his fatness Joie could turn more quickly than the bull, and the heavy animal rushed on for some feet before he could recover himself, and again take after Joie.

"We've got to do something!" cried Tommy, desperately

"But what can we do?" asked Sammie.

"Throw stones at the bull!" suggested Georgie.

"Run for help!" added Teddy Bunker.

"Somebody ought to go tell Mr. Bashford," remarked Frank Bonder. "He takes a pitchfork, and the bull always sneaks away when he sees that."

"We haven't time to do anything like that!" exclaimed Tommy. "The bull will get Joie in no time!"

"Not if he keeps dodging that way!" cried Sammie. "Look at Joie run! That will take the fat off him!"

"But he can't keep it up long!" said Georgie. "Look, he's fallen down!"

"Oh, the bull will trample on him, or hook him!" yelled Teddy.

But Joie was up again before the ugly animal could reach him, and was again running and dodging.

"Help me, fellows! Can't you do something?" demanded poor Joie, as he dodged here and there.

"We've just got to!" shouted Tommy. "Fellows, we've got something right here that maybe will stop that bull!"

"What?" asked his chums.

"Our bows and arrows! Let's shoot them at the bull. We can't hurt him much, but it would serve him right if we did. Anyhow, maybe we can drive him far enough off so we can all get over the fence."

"Good idea!" exclaimed Sammie. "Come on, boys!"

The idea found favor at once. Thinking not of their own danger now, but only anxious to save Joie, who was running more and more slowly, the boy scouts, led by Tommy, rushed after the animal, with their bows and arrows in readiness.

So intent was the animal on chasing Joie and the fluttering red handkerchief that he did not see the corps of boy scouts coming up from the rear with ready weapons.

"Shoot your arrows whenever you can," cried Tommy to his chums. "Hit him anywhere."

As he spoke he fitted an arrow to the string and let it fly. Some of the other boys did the same thing. They did not stop now to shoot the scientific way in which they had been taught. It was no time for that. They had to shoot quickly.

One after another the boys loosed their arrows at the bull, but none of them hit him. Probably the boys were too excited to take careful aim.

"Here's where I get him!" cried Tommy, as he ran up closer to the bull than any of the other boys had dared go. "Watch me stick one in him!"

Tommy came to a halt long enough to pull the string of the bow back as far as he could. Then he let the arrow fly.

To his delight it stuck in the fleshy part of the bull's flank.

"I hit him! I hit him!" cried Tommy. "Come on, fellows, plant some more barbs in him!"

The arrows used by the boy scouts were tipped with small, sharp pieces of steel, to make them stick in the targets. But they were not large enough to do any serious injury to the bull, even had half a dozen of them struck him.

"I can tickle him!" cried Sammie, as he took quick but careful aim. "There it goes!" the red-haired lad exclaimed, as his arrow also landed in the bull.

Then Georgie Pennington also managed to make a good shot.

"Here goes for another!" shouted Tommy, and he was successful a second time.

This was too much for the bull. He had been slacking up in his chase of Joie, and now, with several small but sharp arrows sticking in him, he was too uncomfortable to keep up the chase.

Perhaps the sharp pricking may have made him think that Farmer Bashford was after him with the pitchfork. At any rate the bull, with a bellow that was more of pain than rage, turned aside, and, with a flourish of his tail, and kicking up his heels, he started for a distant part of the pasture.

"That's the way!" cried Tommy, in delight. "We've driven him off. Now you're all right, Joie!"

"No—I'm—not! I'm—all—wrong!" panted the fat boy, as he sank down on a hummock of grass. "I—can't breathe—any—more!"

"Don't talk, then," advised Tommy. "You'll be all right in a little while."

"That was a fine shot of yours, Tommy!" said Georgie. "I guess you showed the rest of us how to do it."

"Well, maybe I had good luck," admitted the patrol leader.

"But come on, now. Let's get out of the field before the bull comes back."

"I guess he won't feel like coming back with all those stickers in him," remarked Sammie.

"Say, what about our arrows?" asked Teddy Bunker. "I'd like to get mine back."

"Oh, we'll have to tell Mr. Bashford that we shot 'em into his bull, and he'll get 'em out for us," said Tommy. "Come on, fellows! Can you walk now, Joie?"

"I sure can. If I can't you boys will have to carry me. I'm not going to stay in this field any longer."

"Carry him—that lump of butter!" groaned Sammie.

But Joie was able to walk, and soon the boys were safely on the other side of the fence, and away from the bull. The animal stood in the middle of the field, looking at the boys, as if wondering what had happened. He pawed the ground, and bellowed, but he did not run after the new scouts. Their arrows had been too much for him.

"Two by two!" ordered Tommy, as the boys came out on the road. "We'll march to Mr. Bashford's house and tell him about what happened."

The farmer was very much surprised when confronted by the Silver Fox Patrol.

"Well, well!" he exclaimed. "What's happened now? Have I been court-martialed, and am I to be shot at sunrise?"

"No, sir," answered Tommy, with a laugh, "but your bull was shot near sunset. We had to plant some arrows in him."

"And we'd like them back," added Sammie.

"You shot my bull!" cried the farmer.

"With arrows," said Joie. "He chased me."

"And they're sticking in him yet," went on Frank. "Arrows are hard to make. Could you pull ours out of the bull?"

"Well, you boys do beat all!" exclaimed the farmer. "Tell me about it." Which they did.

Mr. Bashford promised to get the boys' arrows for them at night, when the bull was shut up in the stable. And I may say now that he recovered all of them, and that the animal was only a little hurt from the barbs.

After their visit to the farmer the boys resumed their march to the village, well satisfied with their first day's hike.

Tommy Tiptop's boy scout patrol was now a settled thing. Several more boys joined his band after hearing of the fun that had taken place on Eagle Mountain. And I am not sure but that the adventure with the bull had something to do with it. The boys liked a spice of danger.

At any rate Tommy found so many boys of his own age, who were kept out of the regular boy scout organization by reason of being too young, that he had to make another patrol. He called this one Silver Fox Number Two, and Sammie Sandlass was made leader. However, most of the time Sammie spent with the first patrol, for some of the other boys had no time to go on hikes, and take part in the little excursions.

As the days passed Tommy and his chums had several drills, under the direction of Mr. Watson. He also took them out rowing, and there were many chances for swimming. But best of all the boys liked target practice with their bows and arrows, and the long tramps in the woods, where they studied the lore of the wild. They learned the different kinds of trees, how to tell the points of the compass when lost, and how to follow a trail with more or less success.

There were also instructions in putting up tents, in making shelters from branches and boughs, and in building campfires. Long walks were taken to distant places, and many were the meals eaten out of doors. Tommy and his chums were becoming stout and sturdy, and as brown as Indians.

They had not forgotten their plan to go to Hemlock Island, and were only waiting for a time when the members of Silver Fox Patrol could go in a body.

One day when Mr. Watson, by reason of some business, could not go out with the boys, Tommy proposed a hike to the village of Dunkirk, about three miles away.

"I've got an aunt that lives there," he explained, "and maybe, if we call on her, and go through a drill, she might ask us to stay to lunch."

"S'posin' she doesn't?" asked Joie Grubb, hungrily.

"Oh, she will, but if she doesn't we can buy some ice-cream sodas," said Tommy hopefully. "But we'll get to her house just at lunch time, and she can't send us away, very well."

The boys thought this a good plan, and off they started one morning.

The day was a pleasant one, and the hike was much enjoyed. Tommy wished he had a fife and drum corps attached to his patrol, but the boys had to get along without music.

They were nearing Dunkirk, and had just swung into a lonely country road, when Sammie exclaimed:

"I smell something burning!"

"Yes, and I see it, too!" cried Tommy. "Look at that smoke! There's a fire somewhere!"

They ran around a bend in the road, and saw, just ahead of them, a dense cloud of smoke, arising from a pile of burning brush. It was near a farmhouse, and it seemed as if the farmer had been burning up some rubbish that had accumulated after cleaning up around his place.

Just then a woman, bareheaded, and showing much excitement, rushed from the house.

"Oh, boys!" she cried, as she saw the young scouts. "I don't know what to do! The fire has caught in the dry grass, and it's coming right toward the barn! Oh, what can I do?

My husband and the hired men are in the lot on the other side of the hill."

"Fellows, here's work for us!" cried Tommy Tiptop. "Put your bows and arrows somewhere, and get busy. Take off your coats too. We've got to fight this fire!"

"How?" asked Joie Grubb.

"Any way we can," answered Tommy. "Have you got any pails?" he inquired of the woman. "And is there a well near the barn?"

"There's a well, and a force pump," she answered. "And there is some hose that goes on it. Oh, what shall I do? Go for my husband!"

"I guess he'll come when he sees the smoke," said Tommy. "We had better get at the fire right away. Come on, boys!" and he started on the run for the place where the smoke was thickest.

## CHAPTER XI

### TOMMY AND INDIAN JIM

TOMMY TIPTOP was a quick thinker, as you have probably found out by this time. And when he saw the brush fire, and noticed how it was working through the dried grass, he had two plans in mind. For a small chap Tommy was very bright. But then his father and mother at home had formed the habit of making him do things for himself, instead of always letting him depend on them. Tommy was what might be called resourceful, and if you don't know what that means you can ask someone who does.

"Now, boys!" called Tommy, as he ran as close as he dared to the line of the fire to look at it, "we can do three things. We can fight this fire with water, by a plow and with fire itself."

"What are you talking about, Tommy?" asked Joie. "Fighting fire with fire!"

"That's right!" exclaimed Sammie Sandlass. "I know what Tommy means. I read about it in a book. Out West, when there was a prairie fire, the settlers used to start another one that would burn off the grass in a big place. Then when the main fire came up to the place that was burned there was nothing for it to feed on, and it died out. The settlers would stand on the burned place, after it cooled, and would be safe."

"What about their houses?" asked Georgie, as he stooped down to get out of the way of a rolling cloud of smoke.

"Come on", cried Tommy to his scouts.

"The houses were mostly made of sod or dirt," spoke Tommy, "and they wouldn't burn. But we've got to get busy. If we can work the pump and the hose, all right. That will be a good way to keep the barn from burning. If not, we can send over and get the man, and he'll plow a wide strip in front of the fire. When the fire gets there it won't find anything to burn and it will die out.

"But we haven't any time to talk. We've got to work!"

"Oh, yes, please do something!" cried the woman. "Our house may burn too."

"Not if the wind keeps blowing that way," said Tommy, as he noticed which way the clouds of smoke were rolling, away from the farm residence. "Come on, boys! Let's try the hose first!" he exclaimed.

"It's in the barn," the woman called after them. "Shall I show you?"

"No, thank you!" cried Tommy. "We can find it. You had better go after your husband and the hired men. You can find them better than we can."

"I will!" said the woman, and she started off.

The fire was now crackling and blazing, and working its way through the long, dried grass toward the barn. There had been no rain in some time, and everything was like tinder.

"Come on!" cried Tommy to his scouts. "No use standing and looking at the fire. We've got to get that hose working."

They all rushed for the barn. The fire was coming closer and closer. The boys easily found the force pump, which was near the big doors. It worked with a long handle, and was used to water the horses and cows. Near the pump was a hose that could be screwed on, and was used to send the water to a distant trough where the calves drank.

"Lively!" cried Tommy. "If we get the water on soon

enough we won't have to burn a back fire to stop this one. Lively!"

Tommy's boy scouts worked with a will, and soon the hose was attached. Out of the barn they ran it, holding the nozzle ready to spray the water on the flames.

"I'll pump!" cried Sammie Sandlass. "Georgie, you stay and help on the handle. Tommy will be the fireman. We'll be the engine."

This was good of Sammie, for almost any boy would rather have handled the hose than have stayed in the barn to pump. But Sammie realized that Tommy was entitled to play the leader.

In a little while water spurted from the nozzle of the hose. It was not a large stream, but there was considerable force to it, and it went some distance. Tommy directed it at the hottest part of the fire. Luckily for him most of the brush had burned up, and only the grass was on fire. But this burned like tinder, and was eating its way toward the barn.

Fortunately there were no horses or other animals in the building, but the barn held some valuable farm machinery.

"We're going to save it, though!" cried Tommy, as he held the hose firmly, and sprayed water on the blaze.

There was not much wind, which was a good thing, and Tommy had the sense to wet the grass in front of the advancing fire rather than trying to put out the main blaze. The stream from the pump was not big enough for that.

In the barn Sammie and Georgie worked away at the pump, while Joie and Teddy took turns with Tommy at the hoze nozzle. Sometimes the smoke would be so thick that Tommy and the others would have to run back. It made their eyes smart very much.

The fire was being gotten under control, and the boys were glad of it, for they were getting tired and anxious. Then

from behind them came the sound of galloping horses, and the farmer and two of his men came riding up on the plow animals.

"Good work, boys!" called the farmer. "Now, Jake—Bill—get some blankets—wet 'em in the horse trough and beat out that fire. That's what we do to a grass blaze," he explained to Tommy. "But you did fine with the hose. What are you, cadets?" he asked, as he noticed the uniforms.

"We're going to be boy scouts," answered Tommy. "The fire's most out."

"So I see. My wife said a lot of cadets came along to help save the barn. I'm much obliged—but I'll talk about that later."

The farmer and his men beat on the burning grass with blankets dripping wet, and in this way, and with the help of the hose, the fire was soon out. Then more water was sprayed on to drench the last smouldering embers. The fight was over—the barn had been saved.

"Well, I can't thank you enough," said the farmer, when there was a chance to rest.

"Oh, we were glad to do it," answered Tommy, with a smile. "It seems that something always happens when we're on a hike," he added, to his friends.

"Where were you bound for?" asked the farmer.

"We're going to my aunt's in Dunkirk," explained Tommy. "We thought maybe she'd ask us to lunch."

"Well, you needn't think about *that* any more," said the farmer, with a grin. "For you're going to stay to lunch here. I guess we can take care of 'em—even if they're specially hungry; can't we?" he asked his wife.

"We certainly can!" she exclaimed, with a smile. "I'll get a meal right away. I've got a couple of chickens on for potpie, anyhow."

The eyes of Joie Grubb sparkled at this. He was very fond of chicken.

"Well, this will be a lesson to me," said the farmer. "I'll never start a brush fire again and go off and leave it!"

"That's one of the things we scouts are told not to do," said Tommy. "We must put out every fire before we leave it."

"Then I ought to join the scouts!" laughed the farmer.

The boys washed off the grime and smoke, and soon sat down to a fine dinner. When it was over they decided that they did not want to hike to Dunkirk, so, after a rest, they took a tramp to a distant cave, and got some stone specimens. This ended the day's fun and work, and they went back to their boathouse, enjoying a short row on the river, with Mr. Watson.

Tommy and his boy scouts were the envy not only of the other lads in town but also of the regular organization.

"Nothing like that ever happens to us," complained one of the older lads, when he heard about the fire.

"Well, maybe we don't hike often enough," said another. "That Tiptop lad and his fellows are always on the go."

"We've got to do more," decided a third.

Tommy had not forgotten his plan of taking his friends to Hemlock Island, and, a week or so after the fire, arrangements were made to go there, camping. The boys would remain longer than when they had gone there in the Spring, to do a little hunting.

"And we'll do more hunting now!" declared Tommy. "We'll take our bows and arrows, and if we don't bag a fox, or maybe a bear, I'll be disappointed."

"There aren't any bears on Hemlock Island!" declared Joie Grubb.

"Uncle Isaac said there was one there once," said Tommy.

"You can't kill a bear with an arrow!" scoffed Sammie, as he rumpled up his red hair.

"You can so!" insisted Tommy. "If an Indian could kill a buffalo with an arrow—sending it all the way through him—I don't see why a bear couldn't be killed with one."

"Well, maybe an Indian could do it, but we're not Indians," said Frank. "Anyhow, we're going camping, and we'll have lots of fun."

"That's right!" echoed Joie Grubb. "I hope we take along lots to eat!"

"Don't worry," advised Tommy. "I'm looking after that."

The preparations for going to camp on the island were soon complete. One day, with Mr. Watson in the lead, the members of the Silver Fox Patrol, in their brown uniforms, with their flag and the United States' stars and stripes flying in the breeze, marched to the boathouse. They were to row to Hemlock Island in their boat.

"All aboard!" cried Captain Tommy, as his chums took their places.

Hemlock Island was reached in safety, with nothing of unusual incident to mark the trip. Uncle Isaac, the caretaker of the camp cabin, welcomed the boys heartily, and said he would see that they had a good time.

The work of taking the food and other things from the boat to the cabin was soon accomplished, and then the boys began to plan to do many things. One of the first was to set up a target so that they could have archery practice.

"For if we're going to hunt with bows and arrows," said Tommy, "we must learn to be good shots."

It was late that afternoon when the practice was over, and Tommy strolled off by himself for a short distance. He saw a large bird, which he thought was a fish hawk, and wishing to get a shot at it, he followed it from bush to bush. Before he knew it he was quite a way from the cabin camp.

Then the bird disappeared, and Tommy, much disap-

pointed, was about to turn back. A noise in the underbrush attracted his attention, and he was startled, not to say frightened, to see an Indian, attired just like those in the Wild West shows, step out into the open. The redman caught sight of Tommy in an instant, and, pointing his finger at him cried:

"Me Injun Jim. Who be you? Come here!"

## CHAPTER XII

### TOMMY'S CHUMS IN TROUBLE

TOMMY TIPTOP did not know whether to run or stand still. He knew that Uncle Isaac and his chums were not far away, but before they could reach him the Indian might do him some harm.

Tommy was much puzzled. He could not understand how an Indian came to be on the island. Uncle Isaac had said nothing about it. But then the island was quite a large place, and a person might land on one end of it and those on the other end would not know of it for some time.

And though Tommy knew there were some Indians living on the mainland, across from the island, he had never heard of any who went about in the sort of dress they used to use before this country was as civilized as it is now.

"I wonder what I'd better do?" thought Tommy, as he looked at the Indian in all his glory of paint and feathers.

"Me Injun Jim. Who be you?" repeated the redman.

"I—I'm Tommy Tiptop," was the hesitating answer.

"Tommy Spin-A-Top! Huh! Heap good name for boy!" muttered the Indian. "Tommy Spin-A-Top! Huh! My right name Whining Wolf, but pale face call me Injun Jim. No take so long maybe. Huh!"

Tommy was still undecided what to do. The Indian seemed friendly enough, but one could not tell what he might do. Certainly he appeared like a wild fellow.

"You lib here?" went on the painted savage.

"I'm camping here with some friends. We're in Uncle Isaac's cabin," said Tommy, hoping the mention of that name might show the Indian that he had protectors near.

"Huh! Uncle Isaac!" grunted the Indian. "Me know him. Me much like him. Heap good hunter. Me show you!"

Then, before Tommy could get out of the way, the Indian had glided to his side, seeming to move like a snake, and had grasped the young boy scout by the arm.

"Come!" he grunted, and Tommy had to go whether he wanted to or not.

Along a narrow path the Indian led him, saying nothing, and Tommy grew more and more frightened every minute. What if the savage were to take him off to some lonely part of the island, and keep him a prisoner?

Tommy thought of all the Indian stories he had read, and he was shivering, when he happened to think that these was not the days of savage redmen.

"But why is he all togged up like a circus man?" thought Tommy.

There was no answer to the question. On and on through the woods the Indian led Tommy, until finally they came out in the clearing before the cabin. There Tommy saw his chums, and also Uncle Isaac.

"Huh! Now you home! Maybe you be lost!" grunted Indian Jim.

Tommy said nothing, but his chums made up for his silence.

"Look at that!"

"An Indian!"

"Maybe he's scalped Tommy!"

"He's got hold of him, anyhow!"

Thus Sammie and the others cried out at the strange sight. Uncle Isaac, however, did not appear to be disturbed. At

the appearance of the Indian, leading Tommy, the old hunter said:

"Well, if there ain't Injun Jim! Reckon he's been posing for his picture again. Land sakes! But he must have scared Tommy. He looks it, anyhow."

"How, Uncle Isaac!" called the Indian, as he stalked forward, "Me find lost boy!"

"I wasn't lost!" exclaimed Tommy.

"Well, Injun Jim find you anyhow," went on the painted savage. "Me bring him home. Maybe you give tobacco, Uncle Isaac."

"Oh, yes, I guess so," said the hunter, as he passed over his pouch to Whining Wolf. "What about you, Tommy? Were you scared to see this chap in the woods?"

"I sure was, Uncle Isaac, at least at first."

"No need to be," went on the veteran hunter. "Injun Jim is friendly. He likes boys."

"But what makes him dress up that way?" asked Sammie. "Is he with a circus?"

"No," answered Uncle Isaac. "Jim, or Whining Wolf, is one of the few real Indians left around here. He has a lot of the old ceremonial dress, and some artists have heard about him. They pay him to dress up like he did in the old fighting days, and then he poses in the woods for them to paint his picture."

"That right!" grunted Whining Wolf. "Paint man no come to-day. Me no get tobacco money."

"What he means," went on Uncle Isaac, "is that the artist he was to pose for to-day did not come. So he won't earn any money. The artists are often that way. Never mind, Jim, I guess maybe the boys would like to have you show 'em how to shoot a bow. He's a wonder at it," he added to Tommy.

"Oh, do get him to show us!" cried the young scout, in delight.

Indian Jim was very glad to oblige the boy scouts, and soon he was using Tommy's bow, sending arrow after arrow at the marks with true aim. Then he sent arrows high into the air, having ten in flight at one time. This was better than the usual record, which is eight.

Indian Jim, it developed, lived on the mainland, across from the island, and often came over in a home-made boat to pose for pictures. The artists were not so much disturbed on the island as they would have been on shore, and so they preferred the former place.

After showing the boys considerable about the use of the bow, and even giving Mr. Watson some pointers, the Indian rowed over to his shack, leaving word with Uncle Isaac that he would come back the next day, to pose for the artist.

He kept his word, and Tommy and his chums were much interested in seeing a picture painted on a blank canvas. For several days after that nothing happened, except that the boys made better friends with Indian Jim, and grew to like him very much.

"He can show us lots of wood-lore," said Tommy, and the savage agreed to do this when he had time.

Tommy and his chums had been on the island about a week, camping out, living in the open, and having a good time in general. They often went on hikes covering a large part of Hemlock Island.

One day they went on top of the only steep hill on Hemlock, as it was reported that old Indian stone arrow heads could be found there. The hill ended in a sheer cliff on one side, and the boys were on the very edge of this, digging away, when a sudden trembling of the earth caused Tommy to leap back.

He sent arrows high into the air.

"Look out!" he cried in alarm. "Something is going to happen!"

And happen it did before Sammie, Georgie and Frank could get out of the way. A large slice of the side of the hill slid down, carrying the boys with it. In a landslide of earth and stones the three lads went tumbling head over heels down the slope, while Tommy had just time to throw himself back out of danger.

## CHAPTER XIII

### TOMMY AND THE ARROW

THERE was so much dust, so much excitement, and so much fear for a few moments that no one really knew exactly what had happened. All that was certain was that the three boys—Tommie, Georgie and Frank—had slid over the edge of the cliff when the earth went down. Tommy Tiptop had just managed to escape in the nick of time.

"They—they're gone!" gasped Tommy, looking at Mr. Watson and the others who had rushed up.

"Look down! Maybe we can see them!" suggested Joie Grubb, as he started for the edge of the cliff.

"No, don't do that!" exclaimed Mr. Watson, holding up his hand. "You may cause more dirt to fall on them."

This seemed very likely to happen, as the edge of the bank of sod was still shaking.

"But what can we do?" asked Tommy. "We've got to save them, somehow."

"That's true," said Mr. Watson, quietly. "And we will save them, but we must do it in the right way. One of you go and tell Uncle Isaac. He will probably know something about this cliff that we don't. He'll be able to give us good advice."

"I'll go!" offered Teddy Bunker, and away he rushed to summon the old hunter.

Meanwhile Mr. Watson, followed by Tommy and some of the other boy scouts, cautiously approached the edge of the cliff. But they did not go far before some more dirt was dislodged, and immediately there came a cry of:

"Look out! It's hitting us!"

"That's them—that's the boys!" exclaimed Tommy.

"You're right," agreed Mr. Watson. "They must be lying down somewhere on the face of the cliff. The loose dirt probably fell on them. But we can't see them. That is, we dare not go close enough to look over the edge."

Tommy thought for a moment. Then he said:

"Well, if we can't see them from the top, maybe we can from the bottom."

"Tommy, that's a good idea!" cried Mr. Watson. "I ought to have thought of it myself. Of course we can do it. We can't get near enough the edge to look over, without rattling a lot of dirt down on them, wherever they are. So we can't see them. But we can go down the hill at some other place, where it isn't so steep, and when we get down we can look up, and see where the boys are. It's a fine idea. Come on, lads."

Led by Tommy, the others went for the place where they had climbed up the hill.

It was easy enough to go down here, at a path to one side of the place where the landslide had occurred, and soon Mr. Watson, and those of the boy scouts who had not been caught in the slide, were at the foot of the slope. A large mass of dirt and stones had fallen down, but they scrambled over this to get as near as possible to a point directly below where the landslide had taken place.

Then Tommy uttered a cry.

"I see them!" he exclaimed. "They're all right—not hurt a bit I believe! Look!"

He pointed to a place half way down from the top of the cliff. There, standing on a little shelf of rock that jutted out from the side, were the three boys. There was a small scooped-

out place, or cave back of the ledge, and into this they could go and stand.

But above them towered the face of the cliff and it could be seen that the edge hung over so that had one gone out on it he might have fallen with it.

"Say, they had a lucky escape all right!" exclaimed Joie, as he and the others looked at their friends, half way between the top and bottom of the cliff, standing on the piece of rock.

"They sure did," agreed Tommy. "And now the thing to do is to get them down—or up."

"I think it will have to be up," said Teddy.

"No, we can't do it that way," spoke Mr. Watson. "In the first place, if we went out on the overhanging bit of earth at the top of the cliff, it might give way with us, and we would fall too. Besides, it might topple on the boys. No, we've got to think up some other plan."

"Can't we go up to them from here?" asked Joie. "That looks easy. Or, for that matter, they could slide down. I've often slid down sides of hills like that."

"Then let's tell 'em to do it," suggested Tommy. "I'll holler to 'em to slide down here to us!"

He was about to do this when Uncle Isaac, who had been summoned, came running up. He heard what Tommy said.

"Don't do that!" he exclaimed. "It's dangerous! Don't call to them to slide down!"

"Is that so?" asked Mr. Watson. "It doesn't look so. We were just talking of the best plan to rescue the boys, and it seems to me as if they could just jump off that ledge, into the soft sand, and slide down here."

"That's just the trouble," went on the old hunter. "That's sand, and it's a sort of quicksand. The minute you get in it you can't do a thing for yourself. You're buried—covered up.

Most of this hill is that sort of dirt. If I'd known you were coming here I'd have told you not to. Whatever you do, don't try to go up that slope, and don't let them come down it."

"But how are we going to save them?" asked Mr. Watson. "We can't leave them there all night."

"No, but we must find some other way," insisted the hunter. "How about the top? We could drop a rope over——"

"That wouldn't do," said Mr. Watson, quickly. "In the first place the top of the cliff might fall off, and hit the boys. Then, too, they are back in a sort of hole, and a rope dropped over would go straight past them. We might be able to swing it in to them, but I doubt it."

"What can we do then?" asked Joie.

No one seemed to know. All stood looking at the boys imprisoned on the ledge, half way down the side of the cliff. Certainly there appeared no way of helping them, and they could not help themselves.

By this time the boys who had fallen over the edge when the landslide came, were getting alarmed. They motioned to their friends at the foot of the cliff, and their words came faintly down:

"Are you going to help us? Do something! We can't stay here forever!"

"That's right!" Tommy shouted back. "We'll save you, somehow. If we could only get a rope to them," he added, in a low voice.

"What good would that do?" asked Joie. "They couldn't pull themselves up with it."

"No, but they could slide down," said Tommy quickly. "They could fasten the rope to some part of that rock they're standing on, and come down it, slanting, hand over hand. The rope would keep them out of the sand. Down here we could fasten the end of the rope so it would be quite a way from the side of the hill."

"A good idea," commented Mr. Watson. "The only trouble is—how can we get a rope to them? It's too far to throw, and it isn't safe to slide down without one. And we can't lower one from above."

"Looks as if we couldn't do it," said Joie. "If we had one of the little cannon the life savers on the coast use to shoot a line out to a vessel that's sinking, we could shoot a line to the boys and they'd be all right."

"Yes," said Mr. Watson, and there was a worried look on his face, "but we haven't got it, Joie."

"I have an idea," exclaimed Teddy Bunker.

"Let's hear it," suggested Uncle Isaac. "We need ideas now. And we need 'em quick. If I'm any judge that ledge isn't going to hold very long. There may be another slide."

"It's a kite!" explained Teddy. "We can make a kite and fly it over the heads of the fellows. Then we can lower a string to them and they can pull up a rope."

"Well, that is a good idea," said Mr. Watson. "The only trouble is that we haven't time to make a kite. Then, too, the wind is blowing the wrong way. But I know kites have been used to carry a line to those who needed it. You'll have to thing again, Teddy."

The boys on the ledge looked down anxiously at their friends. They were at least two hundred feet up the hill, and ordinarily they could have slid down in safety. That is if the side of the hill had been ordinary dirt.

But Uncle Isaac had said it was quicksand, and while it was not the usual quicksand, mingled with water, it was of such treacherous nature that it might smother those who attempted to slide down its surface.

"Aren't you going to help us?" called Sammie, after a bit.

"Yes, we're trying to think up the best way!" shouted Mr. Watson.

"Well, we're getting awful tired here!" called Georgie. "Shall we jump?"

"No, don't do that, whatever you do!" cried Mr. Watson quickly. "We'll find a way to get you down."

"If we only had an airship!" sighed Joie Grubb.

"What's the use of wishing for what we can't get?" asked Tommy. "There must be some other way."

He was thinking harder than he had ever thought before. He wanted to save his chums, and he made up his mind to do it. But just the best means was not so easy to find.

Suddenly Tommy had an idea. It came to him in a flash.

"My bow and arrow!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, you left them up on top of the hill," said Joie Grubb.

"Get 'em, will you please?" asked Tommy.

Joie sighed. He looked up the long slope.

"Never mind, I'll go for 'em," said Tommy.

"No, I'll do it," volunteered Joie. "Maybe it will take off some of my fat. I'll go for 'em," and up the hill path he started.

"What's your idea?" asked Mr. Watson.

"Why, I think we can shoot an arrow, with a string on it, right up to where the fellows are," said Tommy. "Of course it would only be a light string, but we could fasten a heavier one on to that, and they could pull up a rope. And we'd have to be careful not to hit any of them."

"Tommy you've got the right idea!" cried the scout master. "A bow and arrow will be just the thing. Only it will take a good aim, and a strong arm to make it carry. Who can do it?"

"Here's the very man!" suddenly exclaimed Uncle Isaac.

"Who?" asked Mr. Watson.

"Indian Jim—Whining Wolf. He'll shoot the arrow for us!" And, as he spoke the kind old savage sent his rude boat up on the shore of Hemlock Island.

## CHAPTER XIV

### TOMMY AND THE LYNX

LIKE most Indians Whining Wolf did not speak much nor often. He walked up from the shore, and glanced at the group of men and boys at the foot of the cliff, where, half way up, on the ledge, rested the three who had gone down in the landslide.

"Jim, you're just in time," said Uncle Isaac, earnestly. "One of you boys run back to the cabin," he went on, "and get a ball of light cord, and also the rope you'll see there. Lively now. No telling when there'll be another slide."

Indian Jim walked forward, still silent, but nothing escaped his bright black eyes. He noted the anxious looks on the faces of Mr. Watson and Uncle Isaac, and the worriment of the boys. Then he heard the ones on the ledge call:

"Can't you help us?"

"Just a minute now," begged Mr. Watson.

"Indian Jim is going to save you!" cried Joie, as he started for the rope and cord, Teddy Bunker going with him.

"He's going to shoot up an arrow, with a string tied to it!" shouted Tommy. "You're to pull up a rope with the string, fasten the rope to the rock and slide down it. We'll fasten the other end here and hold it out from the sand."

"All right!" answered Sammie, waving his hand. "We understand! Only hurry—I don't think this will hold much longer."

Indian Jim looked at Tommy Tiptop while the latter was speaking, and then at the boys on the ledge. Finally he spoke.

"Good thing," he said in his low, deep voice. "Small boy make good Injun."

"That's right for you, Tommy!" exclaimed Mr. Watson.

"Do you understand, Jim?" asked Uncle Isaac. "We want you to shoot an arrow up there, with a cord fast to it. That's the only way. Tommy thought of it."

"Huh! Good!"

"Can you do it?" went on the old hunter earnestly.

"Sure," answered the Indian. "Me do."

"Have you got your bow?" inquired Tommy.

"Sure. In boat."

"I'll get it," offered the patrol leader.

"No, me git!" said Jim quickly, as he strode off toward his rude craft.

"He's very careful of his bow and arrows," explained Uncle Isaac. "He doesn't want anyone but himself to touch them. I think they've been in his tribe for a good many years. His bow is a powerful one. It will send an arrow out of sight in the air."

"Maybe it will be dangerous for the boys up there," suggested Mr. Watson.

"Don't worry about that," said the hunter quickly. "Indian Jim can generally hit what he aims at. And I'll guarantee he won't hit the boys."

By this time the Indian had come up from his boat with his bow and arrows. Tommy looked at them enviously. The bow was a large and powerful one, made of some dark wood. The arrows were long and slender, and the feathers were arranged in a peculiar manner. Steel tips made sure of the arrows sticking in whatever they hit.

Indian Jim sometimes hunted by means of his bow, for he did not care for the modern noisy guns. But more often he used his ancient weapon in posing for artists.

Taking his position at the foot of the cliff, directly in line with the ledge on which the three boys stood, Jim carefully measured the distance. Then he noted the wind, and conditions of the air generally. His next care was to string his bow, for when it was not in use he loosed the cord, so as not to keep the wood under a constant strain.

"Where string you want shot up?" he asked of Uncle Isaac, when he was ready to use the arrow.

"The boys will be here with it in a few minutes, and the rope, too," said the hunter.

"Huh! Me try one shot first," grunted Whinning Wolf, as he fitted an arrow to the cord. He did not seem to take aim at all, so carelessly did he raise his weapon. But the boys on the ledge saw him and cried out in alarm.

"Look out!" shouted Sammie. "You'll hit us!"

"Don't worry," advised Uncle Isaac.

There was a twang to the bow string, a flash of white, and the arrow sped upward.

It stuck in the sand bank just above Sammie's head, and that boy ducked down as he heard it whistle over him. But he need not have been afraid. Indian Jim knew where he was shooting.

"Fine shot!" cried Tommy in delight.

"I told you he could do it!" exclaimed Uncle Isaac.

"Huh! That easy shot," grunted Whining Wolf. "Where cord now? I shoot him up."

"Here it is!" said Mr. Watson, as he saw Teddy and Joie coming back with that and the coil of rope.

It was the work of only a few minutes for Indian Jim to fasten one end of the cord to his arrow. He did it with care, however, so that it would not tangle. Then the cord was carefully coiled at his feet, so that it would pay out without snarling. All was in readiness for the try. And it was high time,

for already some more small landslides had taken place. The ledge might slip down at any time.

"Stand ready now, to catch the arrow, if it happens to fall after it's shot in the bank!" cried Uncle Isaac, as Indian Jim gave a signal that he was ready to shoot.

"All right!" answered Sammie.

Once more there was the twang of the bow string, and a flash in the air as the arrow sped onward and upward. But this time the Indian archer shot differently. The arrow, carrying the thin, light cord, fell directly at the feet of Sammie Sandlass, on the ledge of rock.

"Hurrah!" cried Tommy, as his red-haired chum picked up the weapon. "That's fine!"

"Quick, now!" shouted Uncle Isaac. "Haul up the rope, boys. Make it fast to some place on the rock there back of you."

This was soon done. Indian Jim had finished his part of the work.

"Throw down arrows!" he called to Sammie, and they were tossed to him. Whining Wolf did not want to lose any of his weapons that he had made with such care.

Soon, by pulling on the light cord, the rope which had been fastened to it was hauled up. Sammie and the other boys had learned how to tie various kinds of knots as part of their boy scout training, and the rope was, in a few moments, made fast to a projection of the rocks.

Mr. Watson and Uncle Isaac, watching, noted when this had been done. They carried the lower part of the rope out some distance, and attached it to an old stump.

"All ready now! Come on!" cried Tommy, who, with his chums, was watching the work.

"Yes, one at a time, and don't come too fast," warned Mr.

Watson. "You may burn your hands on the rope, and blister them if you slide down too quickly."

The boys had often practiced going up and down a rope. This was the easiest part, coming down, if it was done properly. Besides, the rope was not straight up and down, but slanting from the ledge to the ground.

Frank Bonder came first. Hand over hand he worked his way down the slanting rope, until he was safely on the ground. Then Georgie made the trip, being received with cheers by his chums. There remained only Sammie.

"Hurry!" advised Mr. Watson, as he noticed signs that seemed to tell of another landslide coming.

"I'm coming!" shouted Sammie.

Down the rope he came, and he, too, must have feared some accident, for he slid so quickly that he raised several small blisters on his hands.

He was not a moment too soon, for, no sooner had he landed on the ground, safe among his chums, than the ledge was buried under a big pile of the quicksand that slid down from above.

"Whew!" whistled Sammie, as he saw what had happened. "That was a close call for us!"

"Heap lot of dirt!" grunted Indian Jim, as he unstrung his bow.

"Well, it's all over, anyhow," remarked Uncle Isaac. "Don't go near the edge of that hill again, boys. It isn't safe."

"We won't!" promised Tommy.

"'All's well that ends well,'" quoted Mr. Watson. "And I guess you boys are ready for a rest now."

They were indeed. Sammie, Georgie and Frank were rather sore and bruised from their topple down the hill, but otherwise were not hurt.

The remainder of the day was spent sitting about camp. No

one felt like doing anything, and Uncle Isaac entertained the boys by telling them hunting stories. Indian Jim sang a song in his own language; a wild, weird melody with strange words. He explained how he had come to the island by mere accident.

"Well, it was a lucky accident," remarked Tommy. "You came just in time with your bow and arrows."

"Small boy heap smart—think of arrow," complimented Whining Wolf.

Several days passed. The boys rowed about in their boat, and tramped over the island. They practiced some of their scout work, and studied so as to be ready for admission to the real organization later.

Some days they would go off in the woods of the island, taking their dinners with them, and remain until nearly dark, when they would hike back to the cabin. They would cook their own meals over an open fire, gaining experience that would prove of good service to them afterward.

On two occasions they received visits from boys in town, and these lads always disliked going back home, it was so nice on the island. On one occasion a number of the Riverdale boy scouts—that is the official patrol—stopped on their way for a long row. They were much impressed by the way Tommy and his chums could do things. The scout master complimented them and Mr. Watson on their work.

"You'll be away ahead of some of my boys, when you come into the regular organization," he said.

Tommy felt very proud at this, and was glad he had formed his Silver Fox Patrol.

The boys went hunting with their bows and arrows, but I am compelled to state that they got no game. One reason was that there was little to shoot, and the other was that the boys

were not very good marksmen when it came to shooting at moving objects. But they did not give up.

In this way the pleasant Summer days passed, and the boys were thinking with regret that soon their vacation would be over and they would have to go to school again.

"But then it will be Winter, and we can have some fun as we did last year," consoled Tommy.

Part of their time was spent in learning how to track the wild animals, and in making a record of the different footmarks left in the soft ground. The boys also were instructed by Mr. Watson in how to put up various kinds of shelters.

Blazing a trail was another useful art taught to Tommy Tiptop's boy scouts. In fact they learned much of the real outdoors, which is good for every boy.

"I have a new plan for you to-day," said Mr. Watson, one morning, after they had come in from a short row and a swim.

"Going hunting?" asked Tommy eagerly.

"Well, you may hunt if you care to. But how would you like to go off in the woods, and stay all night, making such a shelter as we can with a small canvas we can carry?"

"Fine!" cried Tommy. "That will be just the thing!"

"Of course we might make a hut of boughs and branches, and do away with the canvas altogether," went on Mr. Watson, "but you boys are not quite hardened enough for that."

They started off that afternoon, after a good dinner. They took enough food with them for supper and breakfast, and bidding Uncle Isaac good-bye set off into the woods, there to stay all night, without the shelter of the cabin.

Soon they were in a part of the island where they had never been before. It was wild and desolate, and Mr. Watson chose it purposely to give the boys a new experience.

They had plenty of fun, but in looking for something at which to shoot with their arrows, they were disappointed.

Game was out of season, and there did not seem to be anything else.

Just before supper was to be served, in the temporary camp they had set up, Tommy wandered off by himself. He took his bow and arrows with him, hoping that, after all, he might get a shot at something. But all the wild animals seemed to know the boy scouts were around, and hid themselves.

Tommy was tramping along a narrow trail, that wound in and out among the big trees.

Suddenly he heard a rustling to one side of him. Tommy jumped in spite of the fact that he had been looking for something at which to shoot.

"I guess it was only a rabbit, or a bird," he said aloud, as he walked on.

He had not gone far before he heard the same sound again, and at his side.

"I wonder if something can be following me?" he mused. He began to feel afraid, but he would not run.

Then he heard an angry snarl, and some big body shot out from a clump of bushes, and crouched on the path in front of him. It was rather dark in the woods, but there was light enough for Tommy to see that the beast had curious little tufts of hair on its ears.

"A lynx!" whispered Tommy, hoarsely. "It's a wild lynx!"

## CHAPTER XV

### TOMMY'S SCOUTS PARADE

FOR a moment Tommy Tiptop felt a wild desire to turn and run. I think almost any boy would have felt the same—or almost any man, either, unless he was armed with a powerful gun. And Tommy had only his bow and arrows.

"But I mustn't run!" he thought. He had often read that if you faced a wild animal it would not attack you, and that as long as you confronted it, and showed no sign of fear, the beast would not spring.

Tommy did not know whether this was true or not, but he made up his mind that he would not run. He would face the lynx as long as he could. Perhaps the creature might go off of its own accord, or help might come. Uncle Isaac and the boys would miss Tommy sooner or later, and look for him.

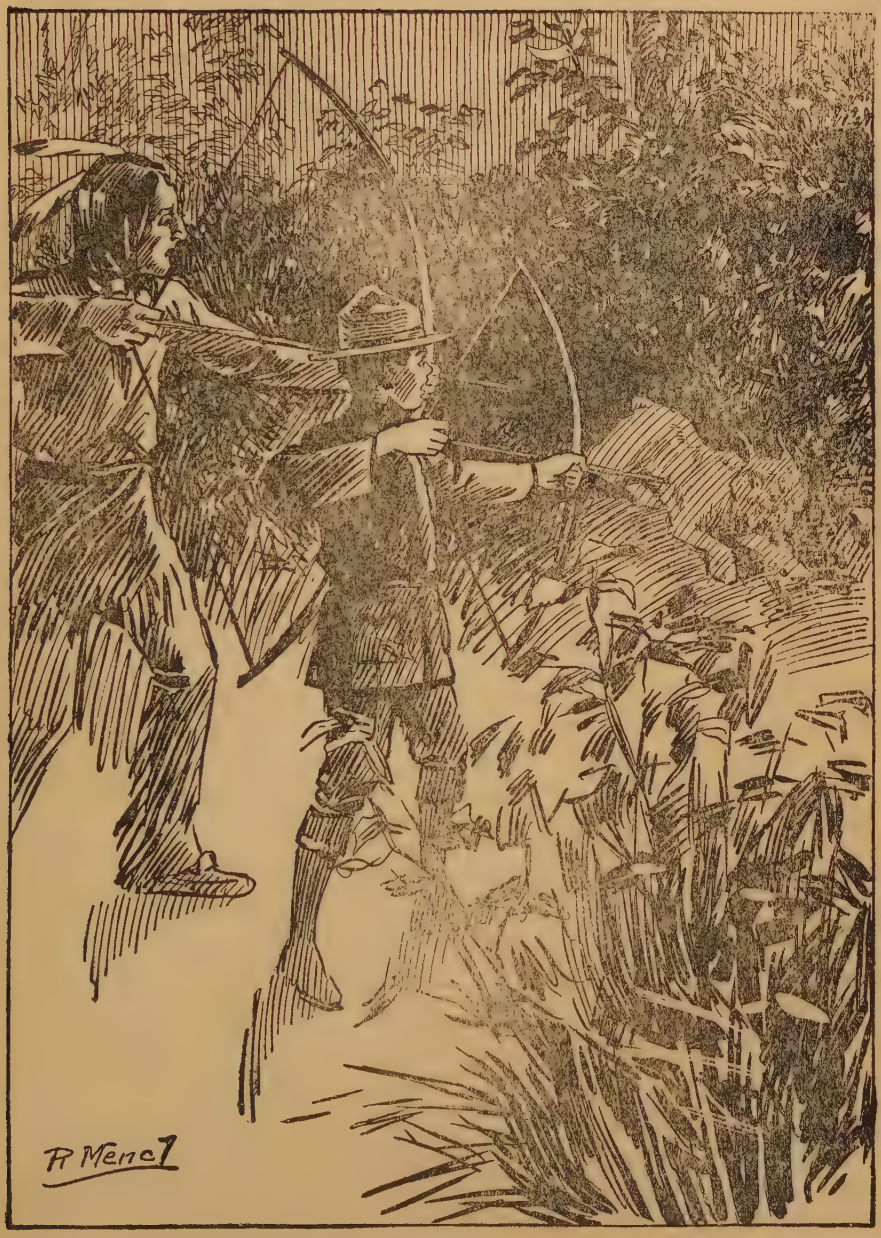
"I didn't think there were such big wild animals on the island as this one," thought Tommy. Then he recalled that Uncle Isaac had once told about shooting a lynx.

"Perhaps this one is its mate," reflected Tommy.

The beast still crouched on the trail in front of the boy. Its tail lashed from side to side, and every now and then it would growl and snarl in an angry manner.

"I guess he's got it in for me!" thought Tommy, as he straightened up. At his first movement the beast growled again, and seemed about to spring.

Tommy did not know what to do. It was very certain that




A second arrow shot over his shoulder.

as soon as he moved the lynx would jump for him, and, though he might be able to run away, it was rather doubtful.

Then a new thought came to Tommy.

"My bow and arrows!" he whispered. "I wonder if I could hit him with one? If I could only give him a good dig it might scare him away."

Then he thought of something else. He might possibly wound the lynx, and make it more angry. In that case it would surely spring on him.

"Well, I'll wait a little while," whispered Tommy to himself, "and then, if no one comes, I'll try a shot."

He waited. It seemed a very long time, but probably it was not. The animal was moving forward inch by inch, like a cat creeping up on a bird. Tommy could see that.

"I've got to shoot soon, if I'm going to at all," he went on. "I guess I'll chance it. It doesn't seem as if anyone was coming to help me."

He began to bring his bow around in front of him, where he could use it. He already had an arrow in his hand.

At his smallest movement the beast growled and snarled, but as long as Tommy did not attempt to step backward or forward the lynx seemed satisfied with just making noises. It was not ready to make the final leap.

Inch by inch Tommy got his bow in readiness for a shot. He raised it in front of him, and fitted the arrow to the string. He drew back the cord and took careful aim.

"Here she goes!" he whispered to himself.

His bow string twanged, and the arrow shot forward. And, at the same instant, from behind him, it seemed, there came another twang, and a second arrow shot over his shoulder.

Tommy saw it all as in a dream. He saw his own arrow touch the lynx lightly on the side, making a little wound. But the other arrow, that seemed to go with the swiftness of light,

sank deep in the chest of the animal. In it went, almost to the feathers.

With a roar and a snarl the lynx leaped forward. But, even as it jumped another arrow shot forward and was buried in its side. Tommy felt himself pulled backward so powerfully and so quickly that he stumbled and fell.

Down came the lynx amid some underbrush, where it kicked about, growling and snarling. But it could no longer advance. It had received a death wound.

Then, as Tommy struggled to his feet, he saw Indian Jim come out from the bushes, his bow in one hand, and a keen knife in the other.

"Heap dead I t'ink," said the Indian. "Boy smart, but no good to shoot lynx with little arrow. Need strong, sharp one."

"Well, that's the kind yours were, all right," exclaimed Tommy, gratefully.

The Indian keenly watched the dying lynx. He was ready to finish it with his hunting knife if necessary, but there was no need. They found out afterward that one of Indian Jim's arrows had pierced the heart of the beast.

Presently the struggles of the wild animal became quieter. Finally the beast lay still and the Indian walked over to it.

"Heap old lynx," he said. "Been here long time. Good to kill. More rabbits this Winter with him dead."

"Did you come looking for me?" asked Tommy, wondering how it was that, at the right moment the Indian should appear.

Whining Wolf shrugged his shoulders.

"Me walk along," he explained. "Me see you and lynx. Me see you going to shoot. Good t'ing, but boy's arrows not strong enough. Me know lynx come for you, so me shoot when you shoot. Huh!"

"Yes, and you shot just in time, too," said Tommy. "I'm ever so much obliged to you."

"Huh!" grunted the Indian, as he walked over to look at the dead beast. "No good for eat—make blanket of skin."

"It would make a nice rug," said Tommy, thinking of the one he had had made from the fox skin.

"Huh! Me make you nice skin," offered Indian Jim.

"But you killed the lynx—I didn't," objected Tommy.

"Huh! You find lynx—Whining Wolf kill him. All the same. Boy have skin," said the Indian. "Better go camp now. Me skin lynx."

Not a little upset over his experience, and very thankful over his narrow escape, Tommy went back, to meet Mr. Watson and some of the boys following his trail through the woods.

"It was getting late, and we were anxious about you," explained the scout master.

Then Tommy told of his experience.

"Say, but you're the lucky one!" exclaimed Sammie, enviously.

"You think so, do you?" cried Tommy. "Well, you could have had my place, and welcome, at one time. No more for me!"

Mr. Watson said he thought the lynx might be the mate of the one Uncle Isaac had killed some time before, or it might have been a new one who came to the island on a log of driftwood during the Spring flood. There was no way of telling. At any rate the animal was dead from the Indian's arrows, and some time later Tommy had the pleasure of adding that skin to the other trophies in his room.

The camp had been established near a spring of water. The canvas shelter had been set up, and beds made of tree boughs with soft fir branches for a mattress. A bright fire had been

built in front of the shelter, and supper was now cooking over this. There was soup, and baked beans, both easy to prepare in camp.

After a hearty supper the boys slept soundly. They were disturbed once or twice during the night by strange sounds, but Indian Jim, who had rolled himself in a blanket near the blaze, said the noises were only caused by small prowling animals.

So Tommy and his chums went to sleep again, and morning came with nothing of moment having happened. Then came one of the unpleasant parts of camp life. It began to rain, at first a little drizzle, but when breakfast was over, the fire not burning well, the rain came down hard. It was no fun tramping back to the cabin through the wet woods and over mud-puddles, but the boys did not complain.

"Boy scouts can do most everything," said Tommy, "but they can't regulate the weather."

So they accepted what came without making too much of a fuss. It rained for two days, and it was a very slow time on Hemlock Island. The boys put in their time studying scout matters.

Then in another day the sun came out, the dampness dried up, and everybody was happy again.

"Two or three more hikes, a little camping, some archery practice, and I think we'll wind up our camp," said Mr. Watson one day. "We've had a good time here, and I guess you boys have learned something. But I must leave you soon."

Tommy and his chums regretted this, but all things—even good times—must have an end. And so camp wound up in a jolly good time for all. Then their things were packed in the boat, and, bidding Uncle Isaac and Indian Jim farewell, promising to see them again, Tommy and his chums rowed for home.

One of the first boys who greeted them as they pulled up to the boathouse dock was Bob Wilson, who worked in the florist's.

"Hello, Tommy!" cried Bob. "Are your scouts going in it?"

"In what?" asked Tommy, as he got out of the boat.

"In the celebration."

"What celebration is that?" inquired Sammie.

"Why, Riverport is going to have a birthday next week. The town is fifty years old, and there's going to be lots of doings,—speeches, fireworks, a big dinner on the common, and all the organizations in town, from the old soldiers and firemen to the boy scouts, are going to parade. Are you going in it?"

"We sure are!" cried Tommy, though he had had no such idea ten seconds before.

"Of course we'll go in!" cried Sammie. "We can march as good as the regular boy scouts, anyhow."

"And there's a prize, offered by the town selectmen, for the best-appearing organization," went on Bob.

"We'll win it!" cried Tommy.

I think it would take another book to set down all that took place in Riverdale in the next few days. There was drilling and practice on all sides. Every organization wanted to win the prize of a silver cup.

Tommy and his boy scouts entered themselves in the demonstration, and were given a place in the line of march. The regular boy scouts were just ahead of them.

"We'll beat those fellows," anyhow," said Tommy.

The day of the parade came. The town was filled with visiting strangers. There was a great celebration, many speeches, and at night there would be fireworks. Then came the parade. Many bands furnished music, and Tommy Tip-

top's father had hired a small fife and drum corps from a neighboring town to head the Silver Fox Patrol. How proudly Tommy and his chums stepped out as the music played!

The parade was through the principal streets of the town, which had been decorated with flags and bunting for the occasion. It was a great celebration.

"Come on now, boys!" called Tommy, as he and his chums approached the reviewing stand, on which were the mayor, some of the selectmen, and others of the town officials. "Brace up now, fellows! Look your best! We want that prize!"

"We'll never get it!" murmured one of Tommy's scouts. "There are too many other fellows after it."

"That's not the way to talk!" exclaimed Tommy, quickly. "We want to try, anyhow. Now don't talk any more. Just march your best!"

Loudly shrilled the fifes, and rattle and bang went the drums of the corps that headed Tommy's Silver Fox Patrol. The bands of music, which other organizations had hired, blared out so loudly that the notes of the fifes, and the booming of Tommy's drums was almost lost. But Tommy and his chums did not mind. They could keep step.

On and on they marched, bringing their bows to a salute as they passed the reviewing stand. The mayor, the town officials and the judges, who were to decide as to which body of marchers was entitled to the prize, looked closely at Tommy's scouts as they passed.

"Look!" exclaimed Sammie Sandlass. "Look, Tommy, they're talking together. Maybe they've decided to give us first prize!"

"Silence in the ranks!" hissed Tommy. "That's no way to do when you're marching for a prize—to talk!"

Sammie grew silent.

Up and down the main streets of the town went Tommy and his chums, and finally the parade was over, and the different clubs assembled at the reviewing stand to learn who had won the prize.

The mayor made the announcement.

"The committee has carefully considered all the clubs who took part in this fine celebration," said the town official. "We want to thank you, one and all, for making this such a success. It was better than we dared to hope. Now, after looking all the different organizations carefully over, your committee has decided that the town firemen made the best showing, and to them goes first prize."

"Hurray! Hurray for the firemen!" came the cheers.

Tommy felt a great disappointment. But the mayor had not finished. He held up his hand for silence.

"There is another prize," he went on. "It is offered by a private individual, for the best-appearing band of boys, and I now take great pleasure in awarding the second prize to Tommy Tiptop and his boy scouts. They certainly made a fine showing."

"Hurray!"

"Hurray for Tommy Tiptop!" came the shouts. Tommy was dazed for a moment. Then he called out:

"Well, if we didn't get first prize, we beat the regular boy scouts, anyhow!"

"Speech! Speech!" cried the crowd, as Tommy started from the reviewing platform.

"Say something, Tommy!" urged Mr. Wentworth, one of the judges.

"I—er—I—er—I'm much obliged!" stammered Tommy. And everyone laughed.

And so we have come to an end, for the present, at least, of Tommy Tiptop's doings with his boy scouts.

"But you're not going to disband; are you?" asked Sammie Sandlass.

"No indeed!" exclaimed Tommy. "I guess we can have some more fun somehow or other."

And they did, as will be related in our next volume, to be called "Tommy Tiptop and His Great Show; Or, Raising Some Money That Was Needed."

That night there was a continuation of the celebration. There were fireworks at which Tommy and his chums were present. And there was a public dinner, at which Tommy was allowed to stay for a little while.

The regular boy scouts felt disappointed at not winning a prize, but the scout master said:

"Never mind, we'll have Tommy and his boys in our patrol soon."

And now we will say good-bye to Tommy Tiptop.

THE END.